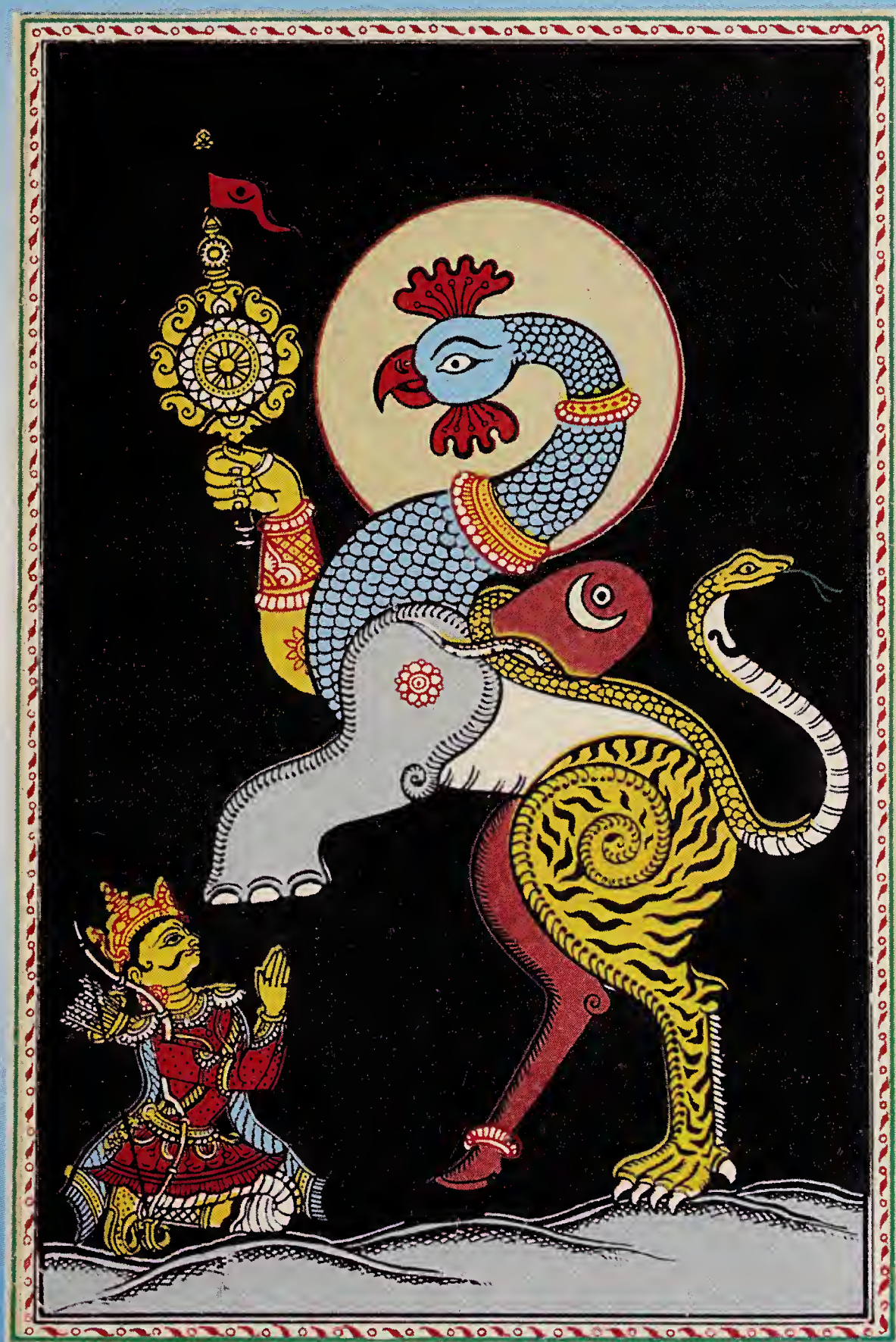
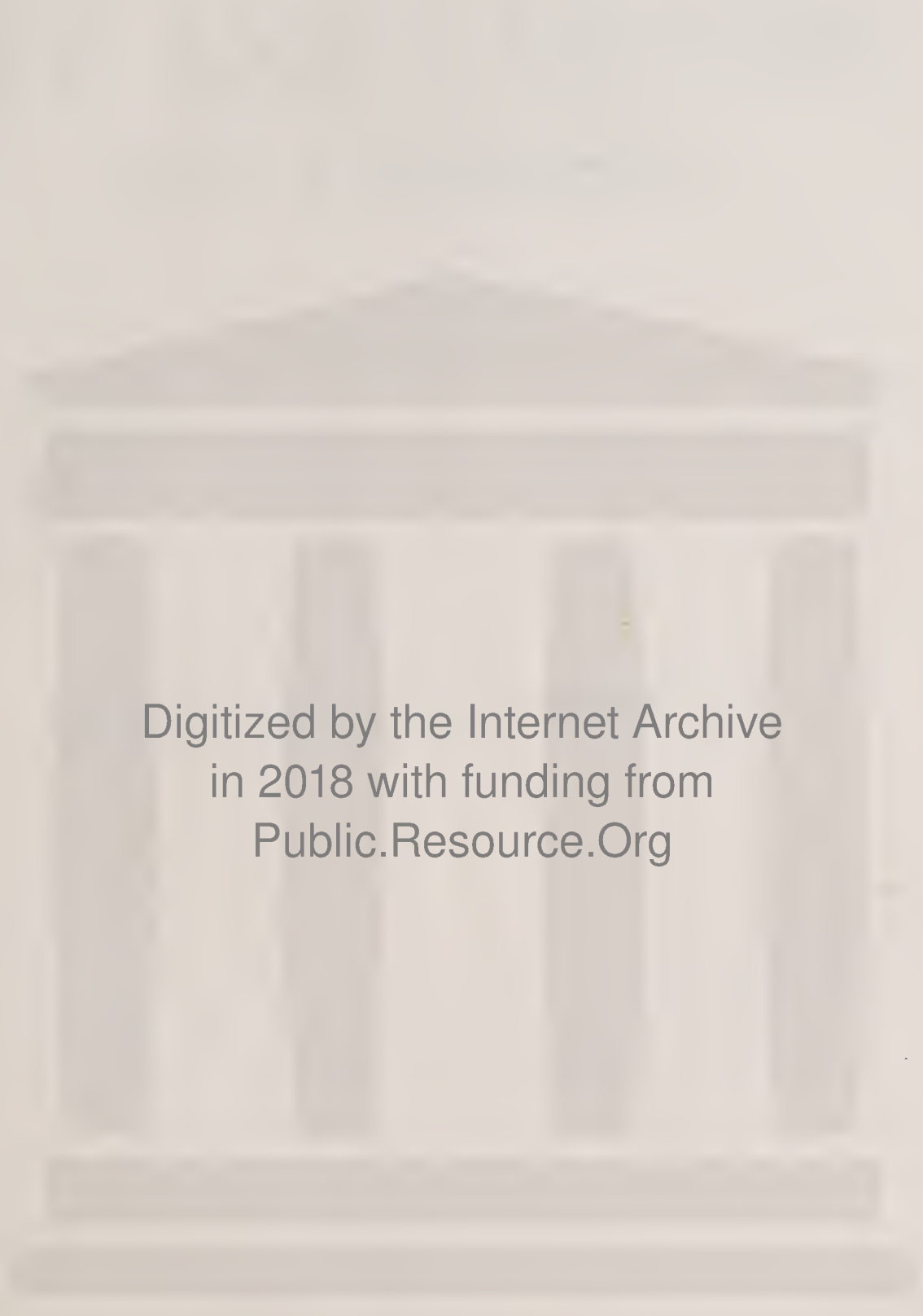


ART AND CULTURE OF ORISSA

RABINDRA MOHAN SENAPATI



PUBLICATIONS DIVISION



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RABINDRA MOHAN SENAPATI



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Map of Orissa

CHAPTER - I

Land and People

Orissa is an Eastern Regional State of the Indian Union. It has a geographical area of about 155,707 sq. km., lying between latitudes 17°49'N and 22°34'N. It is bound on the East by the Bay of Bengal, by the state of West Bengal on the Northeast, Jharkhand on the North, Chhatisgarh on the West and Andhra Pradesh in the South. The capital of the state is at Bhubaneswar, which is a planned city. Near about is old Bhubaneswar town which is called the temple city.

Physiographically, Orissa has three broad natural regions : (1) The eastern coastal plains, (2) the middle mountainous country, (3) the plateaus and rolling uplands. The major rivers originate in the plateaus and Eastern Ghats and fall into the Bay of Bengal. The river valleys constitute the fertile coastal plains called 'Deltas'. All the major rivers of Orissa are dry during the summer except in their tidal portions. The important rivers are the Subarnarekha, Salindi, Baitarani, Brahmani, Mahanadi, Rushikulya and Vansadhara. Mahanadi on which the Hirakud Dam has been built with its tributaries and branches forms the largest river system of the State.

The characteristic climate of Orissa is tropical and monsoonic. Its annual average rainfall is about 1482mm. Most of the precipitation results from the southwest monsoon, which normally remains active in the state between the 10th June and 15th October. Certain parts of Western Orissa, being in the rain-shadow areas, get deficient rainfall and suffer from drought. In years of heavy rainfall, floods inundate and devastate the coastal region.

The mean annual temperature of the state hovers around 26°C but the Western Orissa districts have extremely high summer temperatures at times going upto 50°C.

The coastal districts of Orissa are quite frequently ravaged by devastating cyclones originating in the Bay of Bengal, generally in the months of September to November. Orissa has long suffered from triple calamitous natural disasters of floods, drought and cyclones year after year. This has broken the backbone of Orissa's economy. No wonder Orissa has the largest percentage of people below the poverty line in India - a picture that is persisting from the pre-independence era.

The natural vegetation in the state is its forest cover. Satellite imageries show Orissa's forest coverage to be 48,800 Sq.Km., forming the principal habitat of its tribal population. In the tidal and estuarine areas of rivers, Orissa has some of the most valuable mangrove forests of the world.

Orissa had a total population of 36.7 million living in 50,972 villages and 138 towns according to the last decennial census of 2001. The rural population is about 85% (31.2 million) and urban population is only 14.9% (54 lakhs). Density of population is 236 per Sq.Km. Sex ratio is 972 females per 1000 males. The literacy rate is 63.6 percent. Orissa's economy being primarily agricultural, majority of workforce is composed of land-holding farmers (44%) and landless agricultural labourers (28%). The rest pursue other occupations.

Agriculture is the most important occupation of the people. Amongst cereals grown in Orissa, rice is the dominant crop, accounting for 82 percent of the total area under cereals. Pulses and oilseeds are grown mostly as second crops, principally in rainfed lands. Rice production, however, fluctuates because of natural calamities like drought, flood and cyclone, which affect the crops and consequently the economic condition of the people.

Oriya is the official language of the State and is the mother tongue and spoken language of almost 84 percent of the people.

Other linguistic groups also understand and speak Oriya. English is spoken by the educated class.

Majority of the population, almost 92%, profess Hinduism as their faith. Perfect religious harmony and peace has always prevailed among different religious denominations. Among the Hindus, Scheduled Castes (Harijan), Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes (OBC) constitute 85% of the state's populations. A large number of tribes practice their own tribal religious cults and quite a substantial number have embraced Christianity.

Orissa is the homeland of as many as sixty-two different tribal communities with a total population of 70 lakhs according to 1991 census (22 percent of total population). They inhabit mostly in forest-clad mountainous regions. The main tribal communities are Kondhs, Sauras, Gonds, Parajas, Gadbas, Koyas, Oraons, Santals, Bhumijas, Bondas and Juangs. Each tribe has its traditional belief about creation and cosmology, Gods and demons, good and evil forces and its specific festivals, rituals for all occasions including ancestor worship, and its distinctive repertory of dance and music, tales of joy and sorrow and distinctive life styles. They rejoice in a life of freedom and love to live in the midst of nature. They mostly depend upon cereals that they grow as well as natural forest produce, which they collect and sell for a living. With the advent of modernity, tribes are getting exposed to and adopting new lifestyles and cultural ethos.

People in Orissa, whether rural or urban, live in families. Marriage is monogamous. Social life among castes and communities is very cordial.

The history of Orissa has been shaped as much by the forces of time, as by the forces of power politics and the intense religious and artistic activities.

History of Orissa dates back to a remote antiquity. In different periods it bore names like Kalinga, Utkala and Odra, none of which was exactly coterminous in area with present Orissa. The names signified different territorial extent and configuration of land areas, ruled by different dynasties of rulers

at different periods. Each of these comprised large parts of present Orissa but also included areas forming parts of the adjacent states. The word 'Utkala' meant 'Land of Artistic Excellence' which implies that Orissa had been famous for its art and culture for long.

In the absence of recorded history over long periods, historians have placed reliance on archeological discoveries to reconstruct the past. Rock engravings and rock paintings bearing testimony to the pre-historic Rock Art of Orissa, discovered in the Western districts indicate that prehistoric men had lived there. Excavations and surveys have brought to light prehistoric remains and many types of tools of the Stone Age culture, which prevailed in Western Orissa and also some other regions of the State. Metal Age sites have been found in Sankarjang in Central Orissa and Golbai in coastal Orissa. Iron tools have also been found. With more excavations at different sites, it will be possible to open up the hoary past of Orissa, more particularly the prehistoric period leading up to Mauryan rule.

Political history of Orissa opens with the rule of the Nanda Emperors of Magadha. According to the Hatigumpha inscription of Emperor Kharavela at Udayagiri near Bhubaneswar, a Nanda King had taken away the Kalinga Jinasan to Magadha. However, Nanda political hegemony over Orissa was short-lived. After its fall, Chandragupta Maurya succeeded to the Magadha throne. Probably sometime during the early years of Maurya rule, the then Orissa repudiated Maurya Rule. Ashoka, the grandson of Chandragupta, possibly to regain the kingdom, invaded Kalinga. Lakhs of soldiers either died or were taken as captives. The bloodshed and loss of life and property as well as widespread destruction moved Ashoka so intensely that he embraced Buddhism and preached the religion of peace and non-violence far and wide.

The next great epoch in the history of Orissa was the reign of Kharavela, a Jain King who ruled in the 1st century B.C. His achievements were remarkable. He conquered many regions, and gave them good administration. He played a prominent part in Jain religious activities. He built the caves in Khandagiri and

Udayagiri hills near Bhubaneswar to provide shelter to Jain monks.

History of Orissa after Kharavela remains in darkness for several centuries. By the 4th century A.D., several portions of Orissa had come under the rule of Imperial Guptas. Thereafter several small or big dynasties ruled simultaneously or in succession over different parts of Orissa. The Sailodbhava dynasty of Kangoda, was most important of them. From the accounts of noted Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang, who visited Orissa in the 7th Century A.D., it is evident that Harsha Siladitya who first conquered Kangoda, extended his rule to the rest of Orissa. Harsha was a champion of the Mahayan school of Buddhism.

In the eighth century A.D., the most remarkable feature of Orissan history was its overseas maritime trade and commerce, and eventual establishment of colonies in South-East Asia. To promote overseas trade, several busy seaports came into existence along the seacoast of Orissa. Excavations and investigations are under way to glean further details.

During the 8th and 9th centuries, a powerful dynasty known as Bhaumakaras ruled over Utkal, famous for the temple dedicated to Viraja, the presiding deity, which was the seat of Government of the Bhaumakaras. Orissan sculpture and architecture at that time was at a very developed stage. The Bhaumakara rule was followed by the rule of Somavansi rulers of Orissa belonging to the renowned Keshari dynasty during the 10th and 11th centuries. Saivism became the predominant Hindu cult and enjoyed their patronage. Numerous Saiva temples, including the famous Lingaraj temple in Bhubaneswar, renowned for its sculptural excellence, were built during their rule.

By the end of the 11th Century A.D. and early 12th Century, the Gangas captured political power over Orissa. The first ruler of this dynasty, Anantavarma Choda Gangadeva (1078-1147) started construction of the great Jagannath Temple at Puri. The temple was completed by his successors. The Ganga rulers warded off Muslim invasion of Orissa and extended their empire. By the 13th Century, Orissan architecture and sculpture

had reached its zenith with the construction of the famous Sun Temple (Black Pagoda) at Konarka by the Ganga ruler Narsinghadeva - I who reigned from 1238 to 1264 A.D.

After the collapse of the Ganga dynasty, the Suryavansi Gajapati Dynasty succeeded to the Kalinga Empire. The first Gajapati King was Kapilaendradeva (1435-1466) who extended his empire by winning wars against the neighbouring powers. His son Purusottam Deva, consolidated the empire. But during the rule of his successor Prataprudradeva, the Gajapati dynasty and its kingdom Kalinga suffered a political and military decline. During his rule Shri Chaitanya, the Vaishnavite Saint and preacher of Bhakti cult, came to Orissa. Under the patronage of Prataprudra, the Krishna Bhakti movement spread in the state. The weakened military force could not successfully confront external invasions. With the death of Prataprudradeva, the Gajapati rule came to an end. The last independent King of Orissa, Mukunda Deva, was killed in a battle against the Afghan invaders of Bengal. With his death, Orissa lost her political independence in 1568.

The Afghans conquered Orissa when the Mughal Emperor Akbar was ruling in Delhi. The Afghan-Mughal confrontation continued till Raja Mansingha, being directed by Akbar, suppressed the Afghans and ended their rule in Orissa and brought it under the Mughal Rule. Raja Mansingh appointed Ramachandra Deva, Raja of Khurda, as king of Puri and entrusted him the management of the Temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri, including performance of some religious duties. The tradition continues upto the present day.

The Mughals ruled over Orissa for a century. After the death of Aurangzeb, the Mughal empire broke up and Orissa came under the rule of the virtually independent Nawabs of Bengal. But this did not last long. From 1741, Raghuji Bhonsala, the Maratha ruler of Nagpur, challenged with his Maratha army the hold of Alivardi Khan, the Nawab over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Orissa became the battleground between these two contending forces. Finally, after ten years of armed struggle, Alivardi ceded Orissa to the Maratha power. The Maratha rule in Orissa lasted for more than half a century.

The British (East India Company) seized Orissa in 1803 from the Marathas. With British occupation, the territorial integrity of Orissa was broken up, the Northern portions being merged with and ruled from Bengal and the Southern and Western areas being likewise merged with and ruled respectively as parts of Madras presidency and Central provinces. The British conquest of Orissa saw the emergence of Princely states or Tributary Mahals, which were brought under their subjugation. During the rule of the East India Company over Orissa, a revolt called the Paika Rebellion by the rural militia broke out in Khurda in 1817. The leader of this uprising was Bakshi Jagabandhu, the Military Chief of the Raja of Khurda. This was a precursor of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. British East India Company forces ruthlessly crushed it. The British Government took over administration of Orissa along with the rest of India from the East India Company in 1858.

With the spread of education and publication of Oriya periodicals, national consciousness began to grow in Orissa. Side by side with freedom movement, started a campaign for unifying all the outlying Oriya-speaking tracts into a separate province. In this movement for a United Orissa, there were many Oriya leaders and intellectuals in the vanguard. The foremost among them was Late Madhusudan Das. He was ably supported by eminent personalities like Gopabandhu Das, Chandrasekhar Behera and also by the prominent literatures namely Fakir Mohan Senapati, Gangadhar Meher, and many other contemporaries like the then Maharaja of Parlakhemundi, Late Krishna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Dev and Raja Saheb of Khallikote, Ramachandra Mardaraja Dev. Mr. Das set up an organization for this purpose, called 'Utkal Sammilani' in 1903 with the avowed aim of campaigning for formation of a separate province of Orissa on linguistic basis by merging together the dismembered parts of Orissa then administered and forming parts of the then Bengal and Madras Presidencies and the Central Provinces. The movement fructified with the creation of a separate province of Orissa on 1st April 1936.

Orissa was one of the foremost provinces in the freedom struggle of the country. Soon after the independence of India on

15th August 1947, the 26 feudatory states of Orissa merged in 1948 directly with the Orissa Province and by the end of 1949 the complete state of Orissa as at present constituted, came into being.

Traditional Oriya cuisine is very delicious. Cooked parboiled or raw rice, dal, dalma (dal mixed with assorted vegetables) and curry is the common meal of the people. Other important delicious curries are Bhaji (fried vegetables), santula (a preparation of mixed vegetables, half way between fries and curries). Ghanta (mixed vegetable curry), besara or mahura (spiced curry), ambila etc. Various preparations of fresh and dried fish, meat, chicken and eggs, crabs are the favourite of non-vegetarians. On festive occasions and also as daily intake of those who can afford, sundry cakes using rice powder and blackgram dal are also prepared. The cakes are named as chakuli, chitau pitha, manda, arisa, kakara and podapitha. Sweets like kora, ukhuda, muan, rasagolla, chhena podo (baked cheese cake), rasmalai etc are the favourites in Oriya households.

The traditional dress in Orissa is dhoti and kurta for gents and sarees for ladies. Rural people widely use these dresses. However, styles of dress have changed remarkably both in urban and rural areas. Trousers and shirts among men and salwar kameez among young women have become common wear both in urban and rural areas.

Orissa, renowned for its exquisite Arts, Crafts, Architecture, Sculpture. Dance, Drama and Music has zealously preserved its rich cultural traditions even under the adverse economic conditions of its people. In the pages that follow, the saga of glorious art and culture of Orissa will be unfolded.

CHAPTER - II

Architecture and Sculpture in Orissa

Orissa occupies a distinct place in the Indian art, on account of her great monuments and masterpieces of sculpture. The heritage of rock art of Orissa ranges from the Pre-historic period to the early Iron Age. The earliest evidence was reported from the discovery of rock engravings from the rock-shelter of Vikramkhol in Jharsuguda district. All the rock-art sites of Orissa numbering 28, are found in the hills of Western districts of Orissa, namely Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur and Kalahandi. Sundergarh district alone accounts for more than three fourths of the rockart sites in the State. It is at the fringes and cliffs of hills that nature carved out cavities of various dimensions. These rock-cavities were rock-shelters that attracted pre-historic men to live there. In course of their stay in the rockshelters, they have left behind their signatures in the form of paintings and engravings on the walls and roofs. The engravings and paintings cover a variety of geometrical forms such as circles, squares, rectangles and human and animal figures of humped bull and deer, etc.

Budhist and Jain shrines : Orissa has kept her past very much alive as can be seen in the magnificent old Hindu temples and even older Budhist and Jain monuments, which have survived till to-day. Budhism appears to have started in the State with followers, even before Ashoka's war campaign in Kalinga (261 B.C.) began. During Kalinga war launched by Ashoka, King of Magadh, lakhs of Kalingan soldiers died in the war field, which filled him with remorse though he conquered Kalinga. A cruel 'Chandasoka' became 'Dharmasoka'. He embraced Buddhism and spread its message of peace and non-violence far and wide.

Edicts were got engraved by him at Dhauli (near Bhubaneswar) and Jaugada (in Ganjam district) of Orissa. At Dhauli above the Ashokan edicts, there is the forepart of an elephant, hewn out of solid rock. This represents the earliest sculpture in Orissa. As a sacred animal figure, symbolically representing Budha's birth, it must have been an individual's art worked out by the local artists. In the rock edict, Emperor Ashoka made the famous declaration. "As men are my children and just as I desire for my children that they should obtain welfare and happiness both in this world and the next, the same do I desire for all men."

The Buddhist heritage of Orissa is rich both in sculpture and architecture. The account of Hiuen T'san, a Chinese traveller who visited Orissa in 638 A.D., has furnished accounts of the condition of Buddhism in the Seventh Century A.D. He has reported the existence of several hundred monasteries and hundreds of Buddhist monks. Excavations at three contiguous hillsites of Lalitgiri, Udayagiri, and Ratnagiri proved the building spree in ancient past which was accelerated during the eighth and the following centuries. This phenomenal growth in Buddhist shrines was due to active patronage of the Bhauma-Kar Kings who ruled Orissa over two centuries. The first few rulers were Buddhists and actively promoted the faith by their building activities particularly monasteries. The rich artistic remains in Lalitgiri, Udaygiri and Ratnagiri show existence of Stupas, monasteries and a large number of images of Buddha and Boddhisattwa of great artistic merit. These Buddhist establishments flourished during the rule of the Bhauma-Karas. Apart from these, there were other remains of Buddhist establishments and monuments in various other parts of Orissa. With the nucleus of Ratnagiri dating back to the 5th century A.D., it witnessed a phenomenal growth in architectural and sculptural art till 12th Century A.D. Thereafter building activity declined so also Buddhism. Buddhism ceased to be a major religious force under the Hindu Ganga dynasty who came to power in Orissa in 12th Century A.D.

In ancient Orissa, Jainism was in a very flourishing condition, as revealed from remains of Jain monuments and inscriptions at Khandagiri and Udaygiri hills near Bhubaneswar. Jainism was

propagated in Kalinga earlier. But in the first century B.C., during the reign of Emperor Kharvela, it witnessed, the golden age. King Kharvela was himself a Jain. Caves in Khandagiri and Udaygiri hills represent Orissa's cave architecture dating back to the first century B.C. The caves were cut out in solid rocks on the orders of Emperor Kharavela for use by the Jain monks. The artistic sculptures in the caves are very attractive.

Kharavela belonged to Chedi dynasty. Apart from being a military genius, he was proficient in all arts. The Hatigumpha inscriptions engraved in the hills near Bhubaneswar, carries a record of events of the reign of King Kharvela. Under him, Kalinga became one of the strongest powers of the country, having overrun Magadha and other areas. The architectural features of the caves near Bhubaneswar consist of facades of pillared verandhs and the cells. The caves are adorned with pictures of a large variety of animals and birds and pictures of vegetable and floral designs. The lion, goose, peacock, fish and snake are all emblem of Jain Tirthankaras. These sculptures were found in the caves.

The fall of Chedi dynasty probably synchronised with the decline of Jainism as a popular religion in Kalinga. Buddhism and Saivism emerged as the main contenders of Hinduism. Though Jainism continued as a religious faith in later period, the number of its followers had begun to dwindle. From the accounts of the visit of Hiuen T'sang (638 A.D.), it transpires that Kongada had a big Jaina population and Jainism was a living faith in the Sailodhdhva Kingdom. Not only in the Khandagiri and Udayagiri hills near Bhubaneswar, but also in several other places of Orissa, Jaina antiquities and monuments have been found in recent years.

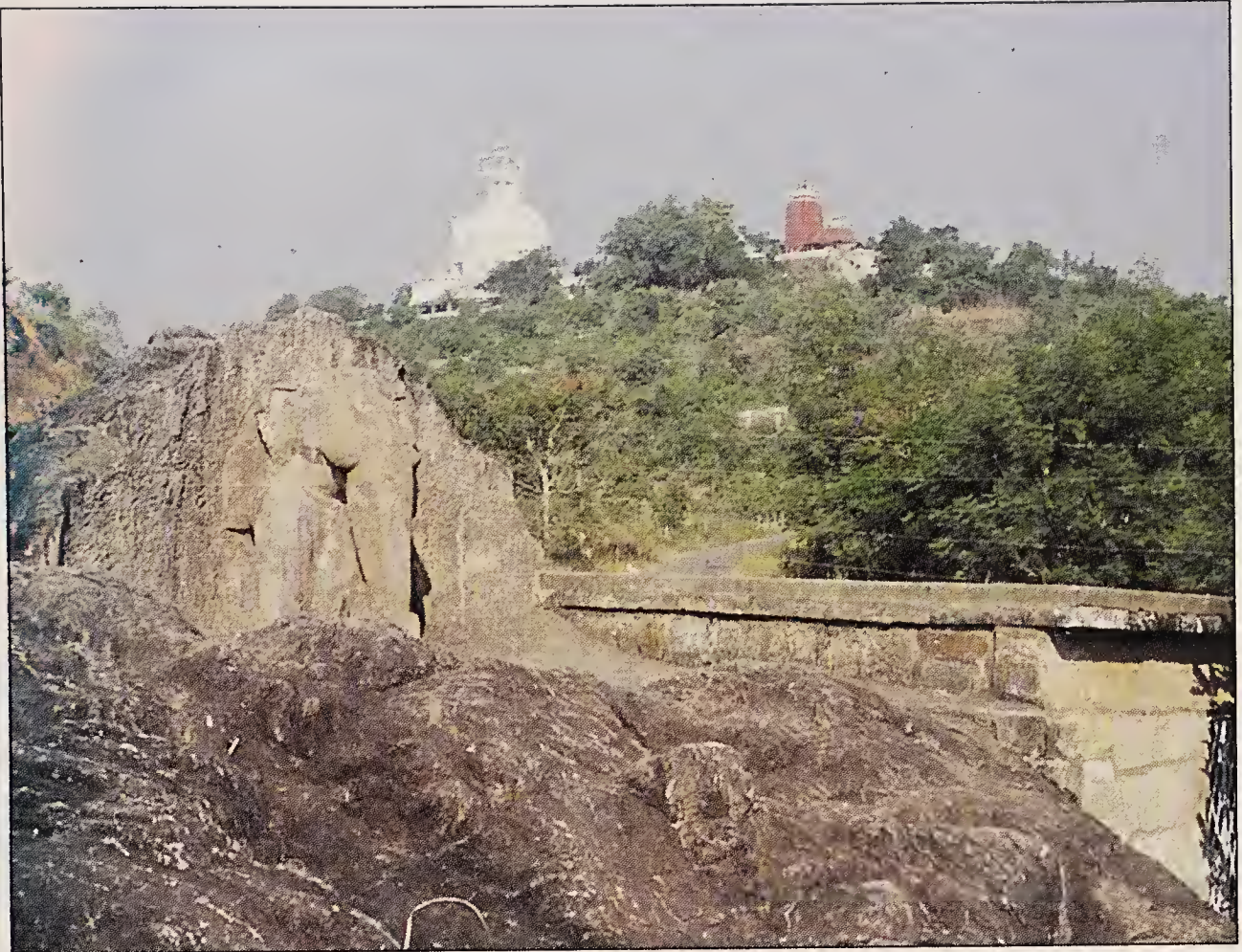
Temple architecture : Architecture in Orissa found its supreme expression in the form of Hindu Temples, some of which are amongst the finest in the country. Of these, three are most famous : the Lingaraj Temple at Bhubaneswar (11th Century), the Jagannath Temple at Puri (12th Century) and the great Sun Temple at Konark (13th Century). The Sun Temple of Konark

was conceived as a chariot with twenty four wheels and driven by seven horses. These were masterpieces of Kaligan art.

The whole of Orissa is dotted with thousands of old temples, some of which are in a dilapidated condition. Commenting on the wonders of workmanship at Konark, poet Rabindranath Tagore wrote - "Here the language of man is defeated by the language of stone." The great temple of Lord Jagannath in Puri is one of the most sacred pilgrimage centres in India. Temples were traditionally built with royal patronage, constructed strictly according to precise and elaborate canonical texts, known as 'Shastras'. The architects and sculptors were drawn (Shilpi) from hereditary craftsmen families. Hundreds of temples which were built from A.D. 600 to A.D. 1300 excelled in the field of art and architecture with the result that temples of Orissa became a class by itself and came to be regarded as Kalinga School of architecture. This is taken as a subclass of the Nagara Style. In the evolution of temple architecture, the Sikhara or Culvilinear spire type ultimately became the dominant form in Orissa. Some of the temples represent the mature product of 'Sikhara Style'.

Four dynasties of Orissa viz. the Sailodbhavas (575 to 730 A.D.), the Bhaumakaras (736 to 940 A.D.) the Somavansis (885 to 1110 A.D.) and the Imperial Gangas (1110 to 1435 A.D.) were mainly responsible for the growth and development of Orissan Temple architecture, a glimpse of which is given in the following pages.

In the beginning, an Orissan temple, consisted of square sanctum with a Sikhara, and a rectangular Mukhamandapa, having two-tiered flat ceiling with clerestory. The Mukhamandapa known in Orissan temple terminology as, 'Jagamohan' had pillars inside it to support the flat ceiling. The pillars inside the Jagmohan disappeared gradually in the next Bhaumakara period and with the use of the cantilever principle the load of the ceiling was taken by pilasters provided on the inner walls of the Jagamohan. During the Somavansi period, the Jagmohan acquired a square plan like that of the sanctum and was called 'Rekha' deula in Orissa. The Somavansi period witnessed a formative phase in introduction of Pancha-Ratha plan and square Jagmohan



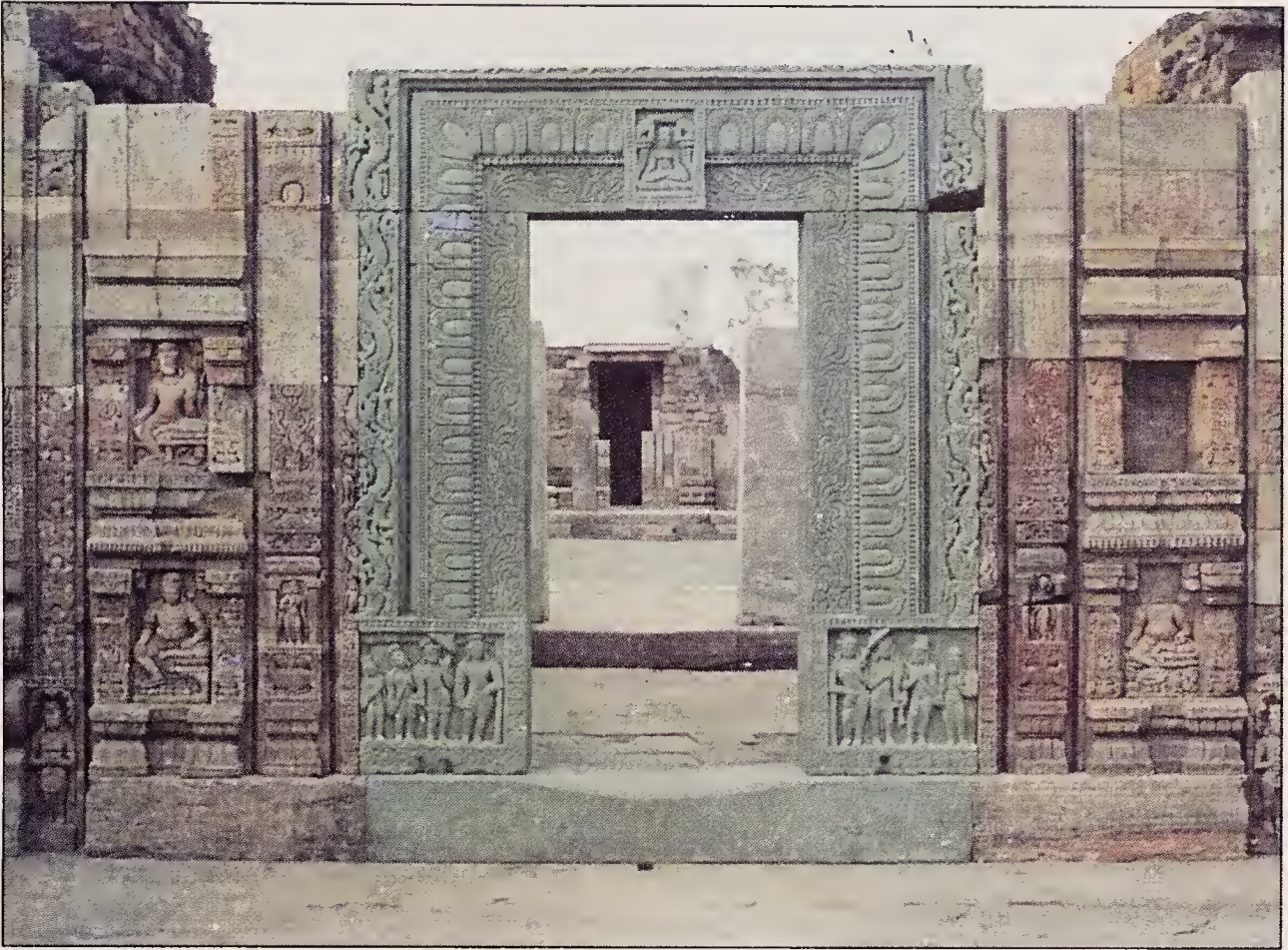
Rockcut Elephant - Dhauli



Khandagiri and Udayagiri Caves



Ratnagiri Buddha in Bhumi Sparsa Mudra



Gateway of Main Monastery, Ratnagiri



Sun Temple, Konark



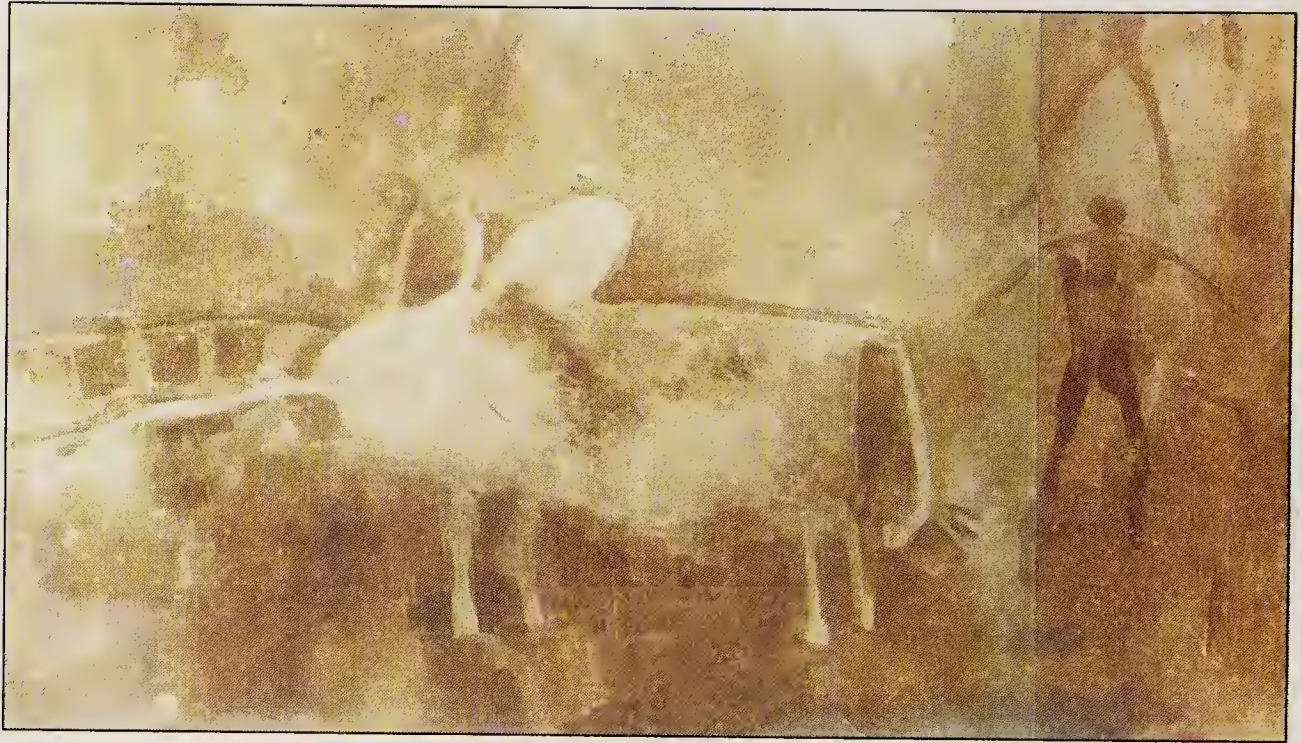
Patta Chitra



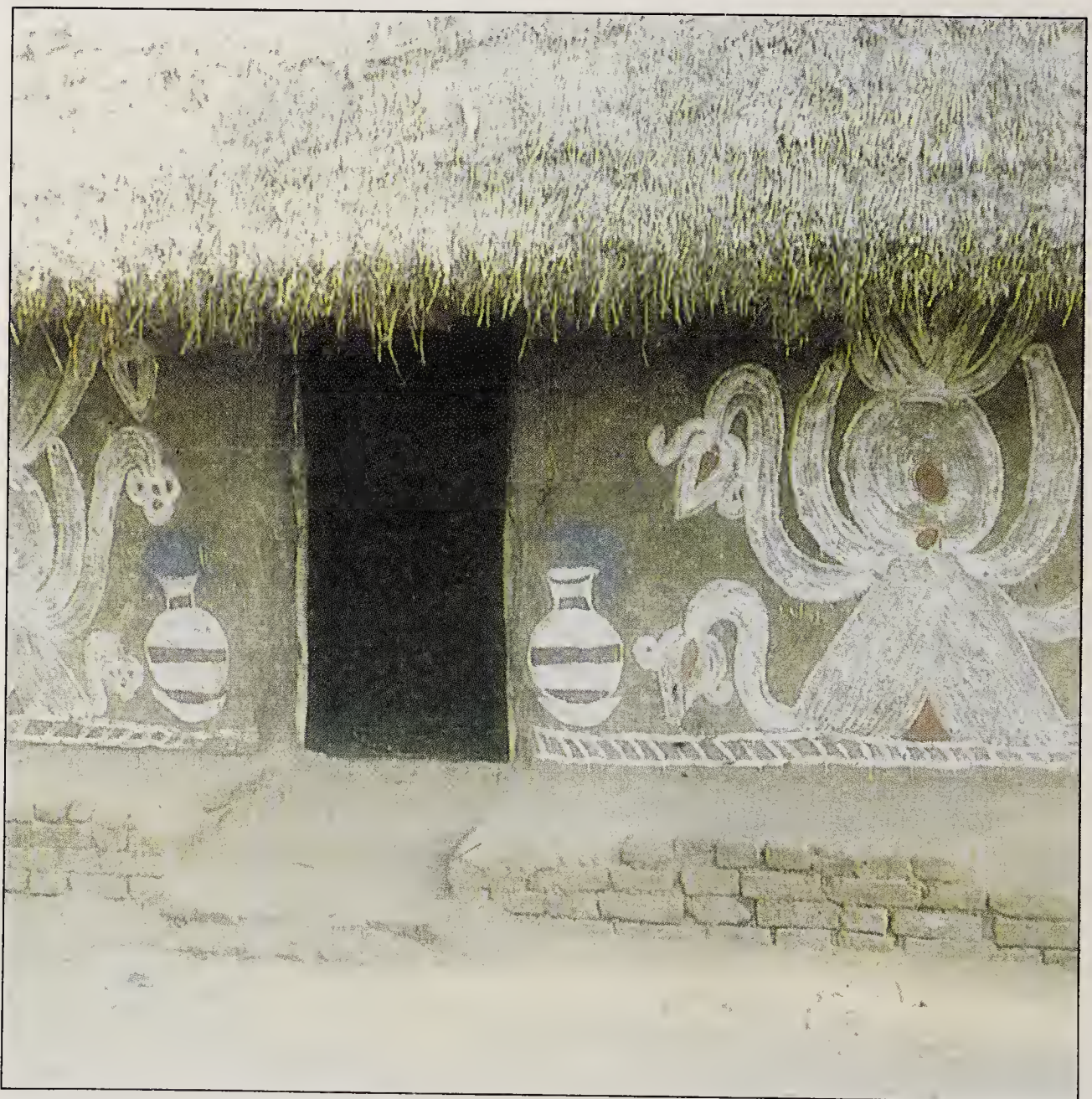
Votive Stupas - Ratnagiri



Celestial Musician, Konark - Orissan Sculpture



Rockshelter Painting, Manikmada



Jhoti - Rural Wall Painting



Mural Painting - Viranchi Narayan Temple, Buguda



Saora Wall Painting, Idital

(the vertical sections in the temple were called 'Rathas'). Besides, the introduction of the Square plan helped in the evolution of Pidha deula. By the eleventh century A.D., Rekha and Pidha structures were fully developed, which were the main components of Orissan temple complex. In the Ganga period, two important developments in Orissan architecture were found. First was the introduction of raised plinths. The second important feature introduced in the period, was addition of two more chambers namely, Natamandir (Dancing Hall) and Bhogamandapa (offering Hall of food).

Sculptural Art of Orissa

The earliest specimen of Orissan sculpture is the elephant figure at Dhauli coming from Buddhist Iconography. The next stage of Orissan sculptural art was the friezes of Khandagiri and Udayagiri Jain Caves. In the Jain sculptural art of Orissa, Khandagiri and Udayagiri found the supreme place during the rule of Kharavela. These were made in the first century B.C. The sculptural decorations of the caves comprise mainly the large panels of popular legends, historical episodes, religious observances, dancing and singing performances and last but not the least human and animal figures. Jain Tirthankra figures and Sasanadevas with their emblems are found in some of the caves. Jainism suffered an eclipse after the fall of Kharavela dynasty. But during the Somavansi rule of Udyatkesharideva (1040 - 165 A.D.) it got a new impetus. Jain antiquities have been found in Puri, Keonjhar, Balasore and Koraput districts. During this period, Tara Temples, housing Jaina sculptures like Rusavanath, Mahavira, Parswanath, etc. were found. After Somavansi period, Jainism gradually faded away from the religious scene of Orissa.

Coming to Buddhist sculptures, evidence indicates its development in Orissa from the time of Emperor Ashoka (261 B.C.) to about twelfth Century A.D. It seems Mahayana form of Buddhism prevailed in Orissa, which later transformed into Vajrayan apantheon with the introduction of Tantra element in its philosophy. The most important feature of the new School was monotheistic conception of a supreme being who was identified with Adi Buddha and given the name of Vajrasattva. From him

originated, five Dhyani Buddhas. The tenets of Vajrayana, were compiled in the first half of the eighth century. The evolution of a new pantheon of gods and goddesses gave full scope to the creative genius of the sculptors of early medieval Orissa. The Buddhist monasteries of Lalitgiri, Udaygiri and Ratnagiri became epicenters of Buddhist art. In other places such as Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Phulbani, Dhenkanal and Ganjam etc. Buddhist Sculptures particularly have been found. Apart from the Buddha figures, the other important feature of Buddhist art in Orissa was the representative of Bodhisattva, Avalokiteswara, in his different varieties such as Padmapani, Lokeswara etc. Large number of Vajrayana sculptures were found in Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri and Udaygiri. These are different forms of Avolokiteswar namely Manjushri, Heruka, Jambhala, Kurukulla, Mahakala, Tara, Manici etc. The Buddhist sculptures found elsewhere were particularly Vajrasattva figures, alongwith Buddh images. Excavations at Ratnagiri revealed that Buddhist art developed in Orissa from about fifth century A.D. and continued upto twelveth century A.D. Buddhist sculptural art was the main constituent of Medieval Orissan sculptural art.

The main bulk of Orissan sculptural art is however represented by sculptures of Hindu faith. Sculptures pertaining to Saivism. Vaishnaism and Saktism were found in Orissa. Under Sakti Sculptures, we come across the Saptamatruka Chamunda, and Durga images. The tantrik Yogini sculptures are found at Hirapur and Ranipur - Jharial. The famous temple of Konark has some of the latest sculptures, particularly the Surya deity and others. Alongwith cult deities in the temples, we come across other decorative sculptures such as Nayika figures, Gajasimha figures, mithuna figures etc. Then there are sculptures of kings, queens, priests, soldiers, elephants, horses etc. alongwith sculptures depicting social themes such as family life, dance, music, games and hunting scenes which were carved out in Konark temple. Life-size Surasundari figures i.e. the heavenly musicians, are found on the upper two tiers of the temple. Also evident in the indigenous character of the Orissan sculptural art, are the depiction of dress, ornaments, anatomical features, facial expression and peculiar poses. A Giraffe has also been depicted in a

sculpture at Konark. Konark temple is famous for its erotic sculptures about which scholars have been debating on its meaning.

The sculptures of the Ganga period (1110 to 1435 A.D.) are remarkable and after this dynasty, the sculptural art in Orissa gradually died down.

CHAPTER - III

Orissan Paintings

Orissa has a long tradition of painting from prehistoric times. Traditions of wall paintings are also very much in existence in rural and tribal areas. These are called folk-paintings. Painting in Orissa is still a living tradition.

The rock painting of prehistoric times have been found in Orissa, primarily in the far western parts of the state namely Vikramkhol in Jharsuguda district, Gudahandi in Kalahandi district, Jogimath in Nuapada district, Manikgada and Usakothi in Sundargarh District. The drawings are fast fading away. Paintings in red and black colours appear at the entrances of some of the caves in Gudahandi hills. The facades of the natural caves were decorated with drawings mostly of geometrical designs-squares, rectangles, circles etc. The most interesting drawing is a hunting scene which depicts a primitive man throwing a stone at a running bison. These indicate that the caves were once the habitats of prehistoric hunters. The drawings in the Yogimath hill probably has prehistoric writings. The pictographs consist of hills, wavy lines, implements, musical instruments as well as animals and human figures. Man probably in this part started giving expression to his ideas through picture-writings. The pictographic writing in Vikramkhol cave is a very important photo-historic relic.

The characters in Vikramkhol inscription appears to be intermediary between Mahenzdaro and Brahmi scripts. It appears that the letters were first painted before they were incised. In the rock-shelter at Manikmunda, there are paintings in red active colours illustrating hunting and other scenes. The pictographic writing found in Ushakothi hill-caves, throws light on the

protohistoric culture of the region. All these indicate existence of prehistoric art in Orissa.

Rural Folk-Paintings

Folk paintings have been a part of the ritual of living in rural areas, where one finds a manifestation of artistic impulses in villages. Laxmi is the Goddess of wealth. During harvest times, Laxmi is worshipped in rural areas with rice-paste and water. On this occasion, the mudwalls of the houses are painted with various floral designs (especially of paddy stalks) and pictures of birds (normally peacock) and creepers of various descriptions. The art is traditionally passed on from one generation to another. Besides the Chita or Jhoti which is painted on the floors and walls for Laxmi Puja, there are various other occasions when similar paintings are made, namely seasonal festivals such as Khudurukuni, Dussera, Kartika etc. During marriage celebrations, Chittas are also painted on the walls of houses. These are pictures of palanquins and their bearers carrying the bride, the water-filled pitchers (Kalasha), floral designs and decoratives and banana trees which symbolise auspiciousness. The Jhoti or Chita and the Muruja are different forms of folk paintings. In Jhoti-Chita, the ingredient is mostly rice-paste in water of requisite dilution. Here the finger is the brush. The walls are washed with earth and cowdung and are allowed to dry. Then paintings are done on it. These absorb the moisture from the diluted ricepaste, leaving the designs intact. But muruja includes a variety of materials in powder form. Normally five colours are in use. White is made out of powdered rice or white chalkstone. Black colour is obtained from the burnt and powdered coconut shells. Yellow colour is obtained from turmeric powder. Green is made from dried and powdered leaves of trees. Red colour is obtained from powdered brick. Muruja is generally painted on the ground as per designs, using various colours. During the sacred month of Kartika, in each home the picture is drawn. Muruja is sprinkled on the ground with the help of only two fingers of the right-hand.

Tribal Paintings

Orissa has a rich tribal culture of painting too. In Saora community, the wall paintings made by them are called 'Idital'. It is the family deity of every Saora. Saoras also draw many other paintings for various purposes. Amongst Kondh community, there are various subgroups called Kutia Khonds and Dongria Kondhs. They are an artistic community. Wall paintings of Khonds are called 'Manji Gunda'. Kutia Khond paintings are very simple and these are called 'Tikangkuda'. Kissans in their paintings portray samlai deity and also portray signs of agricultural activity. The paintings of Paudi Bhuyan, a tribal community, are called 'Jhanjira'. They are more particular about agriculture which is reflected in a host of their paintings. Wall paintings of Juang community include animals, birds and flowers. Santhal community do not have paintings as such, but they polish the walls and verandah of their houses with coloured earth. Tribal paintings are intimately related to their religious beliefs and are drawn to appease their gods and the spirits.

Mural Paintings

The earliest mural painting in Orissa is the great painting of Sitabhinji rock. This mural painting on rock, dates back to 8th century. It shows King Disa Bhanj, leading a royal procession.

It shows a stately rider on horseback with men marching behind him, two persons riding on the back of a huge elephant, followed by a lady with a bowl in her hands.

Temple murals of high quality are found in the Viranchi Narayan Temple of Buguda. In Dharakote, a Kingship in Southern Orissa, splendid murals adorn the inside of the Jagannath temple, and inside Vrindaban Chandra temple. These are situated within the compound of the royal palace. These were probably executed around 1900 A.D. Two paintings at Jagannath temple, Puri namely Budha Vijay and Kanchi Vijay are taken to be the mural paintings of 12th to 16th Century A.D. Dinanath Pathy, an Oriya artist has chronicled the mural paintings of Orissa.

Traditional Paintings

Pattachitras are really, Patta paintings. The Orissan Patta refers to cloth described in early texts. Pattachitra is done on pati, special type of hand-made canvas, prepared by pasting together layers of cloth paintings on this Patta is known as Patta painting. The traditional artists of these paintings are known as 'Chitrakaras' (artists). The common themes of Pattachitra are Jagannath and its cult and familiar episodes of Radha-Krishna legend. Figures of Nabagunjara which has been pictured in the cover page of this book are also made. This mythic animal has parts of bodies of nine birds and beasts namely tiger, lion, bull, peacock, snake, parrot, cock, elephant, man. These together make a strange animal called Nabagunjara.

The traditional pattachitra painters are primarily clustered in and around Puri, particularly in Raghurajpur village. Another eminent product of Chitrakars is the painted circular playing cards known as 'Ganjappa'. These beautiful and charming, traditional small paintings, were made in sets of 96 cards, executed in vigorous folk style. Another traditional painting is the illustrated palm leaf manuscripts known as 'Chitrapothi.' Palm leaf etching dates back to the medieval period. With the help of an iron pen or stylus, the writings and paintings are done by the palm-leaf etching technique. After advent of paper and printing, this art has died out. Many illustrated palm leaf manuscripts are still preserved and are housed in State museum at Bhubaneswar.

Modern Art

A pioneering artist of contemporary Orissan art was Sarat Chandra Deb (1901-72) who was educated in art abroad and returned home after completing his studies. He was keen to establish a distinctly Orissan School of Art. He set up a private institution called Utkal School of Arts where he wanted to build up artists specialising in Utkal School of Painting; but the school languished due to lack of funds. A new lease to his aspirations came when he was appointed as Principal of Government of Orissa Art School in 1957 at Khallikote. He got an opportunity to give shape to the ideas of an indigenous art and made some attempts.

The modern art movement started in Orissa, when Oriya students went outside the State to get art education in Calcutta Art School or in Santiniketan Kalabhaban. They returned to Orissa after passing out. Art in Orissa got a fillip after their return to Orissa.

Ananda Mishra of Puri is recognised as the first modern painter of Orissa. His painting 'Gaja Udharana Vesha' is a good piece of art. Muralidhar Tali was a good oil painter. Gopal Kanungo drew paintings based on impressionism and culism. He made portraits of leading Oriya leaders and literatures. Other important artists like Gourang Chandra Soma, painted in the mythic vein while Ajit Keshari Ray, who got art education in England, introduced a strain of modernism in Orissan Art. Ananta Panda made landscapes, Binod Routray was good at miniature paintings while Laxmidhar Das is credited with making quick sketches. Bipin Behari Ray, a deaf and dumb artist, who got art education in England is well-known for protraitures. But before the aforesaid trained artists appeared in the scene, Bimbadhar Verma (1901-1953) made a strong presence in Modern Art with traditional Oriya settings. He was a self-taught painter without any formal art education. His most well-known work is 'Palli Badhu' (Village bride), a water colour on silk. His affinity for the folk subjects found expression in the famous painting 'Godhuli Ragini' showing a young boy returning home at twilight while playing a flute. His rural and folk sensibility came to the fore in his paintings.

The Khalikote group of artists who passed out of the Art College have distinguished themselves in their profession. They include, Dinanath Pathy, Siva Panigrahi, Kasinath Jena, Narayan Rao, Ramahari Jena and Baladev Mohartha. Dinanath Pathy in his introduction to Oddiyan, a volume of six contemporary painters, made a fervent appeal that Orissa's inherited visual culture was completely ignored by modern art practices and should be restored. It may not be out of place to mention here that Ananda Panda who was an Art teacher in Khallikote Art School left it saying it has lost its sense of direction. He with other artists formed the working Artist's Association. He organised shows in different parts of Orissa.

Govt. of Orissa set up at Bhubaneswar a second Art College in 1962. The Orissa Lalit Kala Academy was set up at Bhubaneswar in 1962 by State Government. But these institutions have not contributed much to the contemporary modern Art in Orissa, which could be called "Path breaking".

Jatin Das and Prafulla Mohanty are two prominent artists who have made a mark outside the State. Jatin Das got training in art in the J.J. School at Bombay. His painting style was characterised by a vigorous and energetic work. He got preoccupied with human forms. Today he is one of the leading artists of the country. The other artist, Prafulla Mohanty, lived much of his life in England. His work was in a geometric language of symbol and colour. He identified himself with the neo-tantric painters.

CHAPTER - IV

Oriya Music

Folk music is an expression of innermost experiences of human mind. It is not standardised and varies in scale, interval and tonality. The rhythms of folk music appeal to the heart directly. A folk song is inherited and maintained by oral tradition. Folk music is both vocal and instrumental. Game songs, swing songs, songs of festivals are vocal while beggars, mendicants sing mostly ballads using 'ektara' and other musical instruments. Children sing while playing, maidens sing on the swing during Raja Festival, the cartman sings while driving his cart. Here are some selections from Oriya folk songs;

Cartman's songs :

Rama is gone and
gone to the forest,
Run up 'O' Baula
We have to go a long distance
My bullocks are slow-going,
It is a rough road.
And have to join my friend
the cartman who has gone ahead.

(L.K.M.)

In Raja Festival :

The swing festival (Raja) has come,
and I like to see it arm in
arm with my beloved.
Now I wish to decorate myself
with 'abhira' and adorn the
pretty face of my beloved with the same.

(L.K.M.)

Orissa has the third largest concentration of tribals in the country, distributed over sixty-two communities. Each tribe has its own distinct music and dance, different from the other. The tribals have developed their own culture, attuned to nature. Here are some excerpts from tribal songs :

Saora Song

Like ripe dates the youth is fair
 Like the small dates the youth is fair
 O sister, my mind gets engaged there
 The one constant thought is how to sport
 with him always.

(S.K.M.)

A Song of Bonda Paraja

Drops of darkness covering both here and there
 And swaying and thawing.
 And lightning dances its hard glint sabre,
 In antic flashes from gorge to summit
 floods are released
 The forest land shivers with cold
 To the ecstasy of blasts and thunder
 The wild rain pours its song from hill to hill.

(S.K.M.)

A historical background of the heritage of music in Orissa is mentioned here. Bharata, the pioneer of music and dance in India, in his treatise clearly defines the musical tradition on the basis of geographical areas which includes Odra, the present form of Orissa, as one of the centres of music. This is substantiated by the archeological evidence left by Emperor Kharvela of the Chedi dynasty which ruled Orissa in 1st Century B.C. Kharvela was himself a musician. In the sculptural panel in the Rani Gumpha (cave) of Udayagiri hill, there is a musical panel depicting the performance of dance to the tune of musical instruments. This is revelation of the type of music prevalent in the then society.

The temples of Orissa which flourished from 6th century A.D. till 13th Century A.D., depicted in stone panels numerous

musical instruments played, in musical scenes. In many of these temples, live music was being played. Geetgovind composed by the great poet Jaydev was one such song. It is a Sanskrit poem based on the love story of Radha and Krishna composed in various Ragas and Talas in highly lyrical form. The Kavya was composed in twelfth century A.D. Such a great Kavya could not have been written just anywhere in the country but only could have happened in a flourishing civilization. This civilization existed in Orissa in Prachi river valley in those times. Jaydev was born in Kenduli village, in this area. In 1954-56, Prof. G.S. Das after investigations wrote a report, saying a civilization once flourished in the Prachi valley. The investigations and excavations led to discovery of old brick temples, numerous artifacts, in the area. Prachi Valley was also known for its old religious fervour, where Dwadas Sambhu temples and Dwadas Madhab temples existed. In the environment of a literary fervour in this area, Jaydev could compose this Kavya. In the villages surrounding Kenduli, numerous palm-leaf manuscripts of Geetgovind were found, indicating the impact of the Kavya on the people. In the era of Jayadev, Sanskrit language and literary works in Sanskrit flourished. No doubt, it was in these surroundings that Jaydev could compose the immortal Sanskrit Kavya. Geetgovind was being ritually sung before the Lord in Jagannath temple at Puri, which is very near Kenduli, Although Orissa was his workplace, Jaydev is a national poet belonging to the entire country.

After 1435 A.D., came the Gajapati Kings. During their reign instead of Sanskrit, Oriya language was used for literary works, so also present Oriya music was born. Poet Sarla Das, composed 'Mahabharata' in Oriya during this period. He mentions in this epic, sixty-six types of musical instruments prevalent in Orissa then, such as, Jhillee, Dindima, Nagara, Tanpura, Dhola, Shankha, Gamukha, Dambaru, Biratura, Tamaka, Nishan, Biraghus, Tala, Kamsala, Tantbeena, Bheri, Mandala, Kahalee, Durduri, Bina, Koda, Ghumura, Ture, Ghanta, Ghagudi, Ghanti, Bijighose, Tanpura, Sarangee, Galaturee, Saraguna, Gayala Singha, Pakhwaj, Laujantra, Kandra, Jhanja, Kendara, Ghuma, Dhapa, Nagara, Pangdhola, Dholakee, Dholak, Gini, Sara Mahuree, Telingee, Dhansa baja, Madal, Dungdunga, Changu, Dimara,

Ghosa, Damphanagara, Khola, Tipa, Dhudkee, Ektara, Tambura, Nageswaree, Kathataranga etc.

Before 15th Century A.D., Vaisnavites of Orissa worshipped Lord Gopinath. Subsequently when Sri Chaitanya Dev came in 1510 to Orissa. Oriya lyrical poetry developed on the theme of Radha-Krishna Premilila (Love theme of Radha with Krishna). By that time, Oriya music had developed much, so also lyrical Oriya poetry. Some of the musical forms which later developed were Chhanda, Chautisa, Champu, Chaupadi, Bhajan and Janana. From 16th to 19th Century Kings and Zammindars appointed court musicians and enjoyed listening to lyrical chaupadi songs, popularly called Odissi songs later on. This was called the 'Riti Yuga' of Oriya poetry. Oriya poets like Upendra Bhanja, Baladev Rath, Gourhari Parichha, Gopal Krushna, Banamali Das etc., were great composers of Oriya vocal music which were lyrical music. Oriya songs, particularly Chaupadi, was based on Raga and Tala. That discussions on music were very much prevalent then are proved by existence of Sangeeta Sashtras, written around those times. Prominent amongst these were, Geeta Prakash (Krushna Bada Jena Mohapatra - 15th Century) Sangeeta Muktabali (Harichandan - 16th Century), Sangeet Narayan (Purusottam Mishra - 17th Century).

The English came to Orissa in 1803. They gradually introduced Classical Hindustani music in the State. Later on the Late Laxmikanta Choudhury set up in 1933 'Utkal Sangeet Samaj at Cuttack, the then Capital of Orissa State. He opened a school for imparting lessons in music to young boys and girls. Veteran musicians of Orissa like Gokul Srichandan, Singhari Shyamsundar Kar, Shyamsunder Dhir, Markendaya Mohapatra and Balakrishna Das joined the school as music teachers. Unfortunately, Laxmikanta Choudhury very soon passed away and his Utkal Sangeet Samaj became dormant.

Oriya music got an impetus when HMV company (His Master's Voice) and Columbia Company, began recording Oriya songs set to music and marketed the gramophone records. The process started from 1907. All the genres of Oriya music were there. Prominent amongst the musicians were Basudev Mahapatra,

Lokanath Kanungo, Banikantha Nimai Harichandan, Gaurang Charan Das, Aparna Panigrahi, Sinhari Samsunder Kar, Balakrishna Das etc. Amongst female musicians were Kumuduni, Prativa Devi, Madhuri Panda, Meenadevi Patnaik, Radharani, Chandraprava, Sumati Devi etc. From 1975, Oriya Audio Cassettes came to the market and that heralded death of gramophone records.

Oriya music got a fillip in January 1948, when Orissa got a separate radio station at Cuttak for broadcasts. This really gave a boost to Oriya music. Oriya musicians got very many programmes and were financially supported. There also emerged a music-loving audience. Further developments took place in Oriya music when in 1950, National Music Association was formed at Cuttack to impart lessons in music to young boys and girls. In 1952 came another organisation called 'Kala Vikash Kendra' for the same purpose. Government came up in a big way when it set up in Bhubaneswar 'Orissa Sangeet Mahavidyalaya' for imparting music lessons to the talented youths.

Around fifties, a change came about in Oriya music. Some artists like Akhay Mahanty, Prafulla Kar, Pranab Patnaik, Sikandar Alam, Bhikari Charan Bala and others left traditional Oriya music and introduced modern form. This was received well by the general public. Now Audio cassettes are being marketed by music companies; but certain amount of vulgarity has crept into them.

The story of development of Oriya music would not be complete without recording the contribution of All India Radio and Doordarshan Television. These two bodies have helped young talented Oriya musicians to comp up. Such is also the story of Oriya Cine music. But Hindi movie music has a much greater appeal to the youngsters than the music in Oriya language, particularly in urban areas.

The story of Oriya music would not be complete without paying homage to great Oriya Sangeet Gurus who had kept it alive in difficult times. Prominent amongst them were Guru Gokul Srichandan, Aparna Panigrahi, Banikantha Nimaicharan Harichandan, Tarini Charan Patra, Guru Simhari Shayamsunder

Kar, Markendaya Mohapatra, Nrusingha Nath Khuntia, Sangeet Sudhakar Balakrishna Das, Radhakrishna Bhanja, Kasinath Pujapanda, Bhubaneswar Misra, Raghunath Panigrahi, Sunanda Patnayak, Gopal Chandra Panda, Radhamani Mohapatra, etc. Late Nimaicharan Harichandan captivated the public with his Jananas (prayer) to Lord Jagannath.

New generation of young Oriya musicians have entered the field now and it would have to be seen how far they provide good entertainment to the public.

CHAPTER - V

Dances of Orissa

Orissa has contributed a distinct school of classical dance to the rich mosaic of Indian culture namely Odissi dance, which has been internationally acclaimed.

In the Natya Shastra of Bharata, Odra-Magadhi style of dance and music were mentioned. On the basis of archaeological evidence, Odissi appears to be the earliest classical dance form. It flourished in Orissa and developed over centuries. The earliest evidence of dance by professional female dancers (Nartaki) is found in the Stone figures in caves of Khandagiri and Udayagiri near Bhubaneswar. These scenes were depicted in the 1st Century B.C. by the Jain King Kharavela who himself was a great musician. The Jains, the Buddhists and the Hindus all recognised dance as a ritual for worship. Although Orissa was ruled by different royal dynasties in different ages, the dance tradition continued unabated. In Orissan temples, sculptures of dancing and singing girls are found in extenso. In the 13th century, Konarka temple was constructed and its Natya Mandapa (Dancing Hall) abounds in dancing images, carved out of stone. Odissi dance is full of sculptural poses known as Bhangis. Another exclusive posture of Odissi dance is 'Chauki'. Apart from archeological and sculptural evidence, a palm-leaf manuscript called 'Abhinaya Chandrika' written by Maheswara Mohapatra (17th Century) contained information about technique of Odissi dance.

The history of Odissi dance did not stop there. The great Ganga King Chodaganga Dev, who built the Jagannath temple (1077-1147) introduced the ritual of dance before the deity in the temple by Maharis (Devadasis or dancing girls). By the end of

16th Century A.D., Orissa had lost her independence and successively came under the rule of Afghans, Mughals, Marathas and the British. For over three centuries, Orissa remained in turmoil and 'Mahari' tradition declined. In its place "Gotipua" dance appeared where boys dressed as girls danced outside the temples. Most of the Odissi Gurus (Masters) of the earlier times were Gotipua dancers.

The classical Odissi dance was revived by gurus such as Pankaj Charan Das, Kelu Charan Mohapatra, Deba Prasad Das, Mayadhar Rout, Harekrushna Behera and a host of others. An equally great service has been rendered by the Odissi dance performers. Indrani Rahman, Sanjukta Panigrahi, Kum Kum Mohanty, Sonal Mansingh, Madhuri Mudgal, Yamini Krishnamurthy, Kiran Sehgal, Pratima Gauri Bedi, Minati Mishra, Priyambada Hejmadi and host of other dancers put it on the world map. Odissi as an independent dance form, came to be recognised all over the country. All the poses, steps and movements in Odissi dance have been codified and preserved by the Odissi Research Centre established by Govt. of Orissa at Bhubaneswar.

Finally, a word about technique and repertoire of Odissi dance. In Odissi dance, important parts are called Padabhada, Bhumi, Chari, Biramani, Bhangi and Hasta (Mudras) etc. The different items of Odissi dance are listed in the order in which they are performed :

Manglacharana
 Batu Nrutya
 Pallavi
 Abhinay and Mokshyanat

Odissi dance has a rich and varied repertoire. The most typical pose of Odissi is the 'Tribhanga' where the body is bent thrice. A fundamental posture of Odissi dance is 'Chawki'. Like other classical dance forms, Odissi admits of the division into nritta (pure dance) and nritya (expressional dance and natya (Drama). A programme of Odissi opens with Manglacharan, an invocatory piece of dance followed by singing of a Sloka in obeisance to Lord Ganesha or Lord Jagannath. 'Batu Nritya' is an item of pure dance, laying stress on poses. The dance is not

accompanied by any song or recitation but by rhythmic syllables which are provided throughout the item. The most graceful item Pallavi, with lyrical, sensuous passages of dance, captivates the audience. It is set to the music of a Raga. 'Abhinaya' follows which is always accompanied by a song either in Sanskrit or in Oriya. Most of the songs written by medieval poetcomposers of Orissa, pertain to the theme of eternal love of Radha-Krishna. A piece from Geeta Govind is indispensable, 'Dasavatar' item being the most popular. These romantic compositions are in slow tempo where the performer gets full scope to depict emotion by gestures, glances and agile movements. In contrast, the Mokhsya Nata, the concluding piece of Odissi, is rendered in fast tempo with rhythmic patterns played at speed which carries the dancer towards ultimate release or Mokshya. In recent times, the repertoire has expanded. Several dance dramas using basically the Odissi dance technique have been choreographed. Odissi as a dance form, has earned world popularity.

Folk Dances of Orissa

Apart from the classical Odissi dance, numerous folk dances are in vogue in Orissa. These were the ancient sources of popular entertainment in the rural areas. They are closely associated with fairs, festivals and religious ceremonies. Some of the famous folk dances of Orissa are described below :

Danda Nata : It is the most ancient of all folk-dances of Orissa. It is a part of the mass culture of Orissa where Lord Shiva and his consort Gouri are propitiated. It is variously known as Jhamu Yatra etc. Danda literally means a staff and Nata means dance. Those who participate in Danda Nata are called 'Bhokta' (Devotees) For three days beginning from two days before Pana Sankranti, the Bhoktas walk on a bed of red-hot live charcoal (fire walking), stand on edged swords, pierce iron nails on their skin and tongues, as marks of their severe penance to draw the attention of deities to expiate them from all sins and bless them with boons.

Patua Dance : For the entire month of Chaitra, the village streets echo with the sound of Ghanta (Brass gongs) played by

Ghanta Patuas. This ritual dance is closely associated with mother goddess, particularly Sarala. The traditional sevak community of the deities perform this ritual dance. They dress themselves as females. The deity is represented by Ghata (the sacred pitcher) which is placed over the head by the dancer to a fixed wooden stand. The Ghata is decorated with sandal paste, vermillion, flowers. Balancing the Ghata on the head, the dancer dances with barefeet to the accompaniment of percussive instruments like Mardala (a variety of Pakhwaj) and (ghanta).

Chaitighoda : This is called Dummy Horse dance. The fishermen community of Orissa celebrate this annual festival of theirs from March to April. In this dance, a dummy horse is made with bamboo-strips and the frame is then covered with a coloured cloth. The head of the horse in wood is fixed to the frame. It is then painted with bright colours and is decorated with flowers. In a big cavity inside the horse frame, a dancer places himself and displays different galloping movements of a horse. Two more characters (Rauta and Rautani) appear on the stage and sing and dance with dummy horse dancer. The couple sing of mutual love. In a group of Chaitighoda dance, there are three dancers, a Jodinagara player, a Dhol player and a Mahuri player. The performance starts late at night and continues till morning.

Ghoomra Dance : The dance is performed to the accompaniment of a drum. The earthen drum covered in the mouth with a skin of a reptile is called Ghoomra. It is a vibrant dance, performed by males only. Young men fix a ghoomra on the chest with strings around the body and beat the drums in unison and dance. The dancers wear their indigenous costume.

Mask Dances : In Orissa, there are three varieties of mask dances - human masks, divine masks and animal masks. All the mask dances are associated with religious festivals and religious processions. The masks are made of papier mache and are painted with bright colours.

Kela Keluni Dance : The Kela are a nomadic class of people in Orissa. There are various groups in the community. Kela means 'Snakecharmer'. The Kela Keluni dance is performed in which Kela and his wife Keluni participate. The Kela plays a

string instrument which is called 'Ghuduki'. The couple sing and dance. The dance of the Keluni is fast in which hips and heads are swayed.

Ranapa Dance : It is prevalent in the cow-herd communities. Young boys of the community perform this dance during the festivals of Dol-Yatra and Giri-Govardhan Pooja. They wear anklets which produces jingling sound. They sing about the childhood days of Lord Krishna.

Chhow Dance : This dance is prevalent in contiguous areas of Mayurbhanj (Orissa) Seraikela (Jharkhand) and Purulia (West Bengal). Therefore it has three distinctive styles. It has evolved out of the extant war dances of the area. The dance has its own code of training. Orissan Chhow has a vast repertory of over hundred dance forms. The orchestra of Chhow is generally provided by the traditional drummers and musicians. It is performed generally during the Chaita Parava. The chhow dance item has four stages of development. It begins with Ranga Vadya, an ensemble of musical instruments which inspires the dancer. After this, the orchestra takes up the initial tune of the dance in slow tempo. The dancers then come to the centre of the dancing area with a dramatic gait. The next stage is 'Nata' in which the thematic content of the dance is developed and elaborated and the drama is built up. Nataki is the final stage in which a high tempo is built up with great dramatic vigour. The Chhow dance grew up with royal patronage in the past. Now a days people and government patronise it.

Tribal Dances

The tribals in Orissa are very fond of dance and music. Dance is their traditional inborn aptitude. They have retained their rich and colourful dances which form integral part of their rituals and festivals. The dances are mostly in groups with an intense community sharing practice. Although the pattern of dance and music prevalent amongst them vary from tribe to tribe, yet there are certain features common to all tribal dances. They maintain the rhythm with musical accompaniments. This consists of clapping of hands or beating of drums or an orchestra



Godhuli Ragini, Bimbadhar Verma



Ashoka in Kalinga - By Jatin Das



Danda Nat (Dance)



Odissi Dance - Tribhangi Pose



Gadaba Dance, Korapur



Koya Dance, Malkangiri



Chaiti Ghoda Nacha (Dance)



Dalkhai - (Sambalpuri Dance)



Ram Leela

of different instruments. Every dance is accompanied by a song which is sung by the performers. Both men and women dance and sing. Some of the tribal groups put on colourful dancing costumes during their performance. Brief notes on some of the tribal dances of Orissa are given below :

Juang : The Juang dance, which goes by the popular name of 'Changu Dance' is performed by both men and women. Besides, they perform other types of dances such as deer dance, elephant dance, pigeon dance, bear dance, Koel dance and peacock dance. While dancing, the girls stand in a straight line in front of the boys. While the dance goes on, the line becomes semi-circular. The girls hold each other's wrist or hand-in-hand and move forward and backward in bending posture. The boys stand in a straight line which becomes a curve during dance performance. The musical instruments which are used during dance are drums, dholas and tambourine.

Saora : Saora dance is very simple. Generally, they dance during ceremonious festivals and marriages. In their dance, group of men and women jumble up together and while dancing, the drummers and the dancers advance towards each other alternatively to the rhythm of music. Colourful costumes are worn during the dance. Other decorations on body and head include feathers of white fowl and peacock plumes. While dancing, they carry swords, sticks and other implements and blow whistles and make peculiar sounds. The musical instruments that accompany the dance are brass cymbals, brassgongs and drums.

Gond : Amongst the Gonds of Koraput district, dance is performed throughout the year. Dances are also performed on special community occasions such as marriage. The turbans are adorned with 'cowrie' shells and the apron is adorned with small pieces of mirror. The girls get dressed in hand-women sarees and silver ornaments. A dance group is ordinarily formed with 20 to 30 persons of both sexes. Only unmarried boys and girls dance. The musical instruments are played by boys. Two boys lead the dance with wooden drums. The girls dance in circles with simple steps of one and two, very often bending bodies forward.

Koya : Dance amongst Koyas is richly varied. The most important occasion for dancing is the worship of Mother Goddess in the month of Chaitra. Both boys and girls participate in dance. But in the festival, only girls participate. During dance, the girls keep rhythm by beating sticks on the ground which are fitted with small bells. Dance groups are formed by about 30 to 40 persons. The most conspicuous movement is the winding and unwinding of circles formed by girls.

Kondh : Kondh dance is mostly confined to unmarried boys and girls. The dances are performed especially when the boys or girls of one village visit another village. When Kondh boys and girls of Koraput meet in their dormitories after the day's toil, they dance. The girls dance in lines and the boys dance behind and in front of them. This is Kondha dance in Koraput district. The dance of Phulbani Kondh is more colourful. The girls wear sarees in two pieces and bangles on their ankles. They dance in rows, facing rows of boys who sing songs and play on hard drums. Special dances are performed during buffalo sacrifice which is called 'Kedu' festival.

Gadba : Gadba dance is performed by women who wear 'Keranga' sarees. They make their distinctive hair styles. The men play the musical instruments. Chaitra and Pausa months are the dancing seasons. Gadba women dance in semi-circles with steps of three and four which they gradually change to eight. The body is often bent forward while skilful moves are made on the heels.

Other tribal dances include Dalkahi dance, Karma dance, Dhap dance, Stick dances etc. which are still in vogue.

The tribals are now exposed to new forms of lifestyle and culture. Like all societies, they are changing under the impact of forces of modernity.

CHAPTER - VI

Oriya Folk-Plays, Theatres and Yatras

Folk-plays have grown over the centuries and are a part of the life and culture of the rural people. Folk plays in the form of songs, dances and dramas have nourished a rich tradition. Though many of these have now become extinct and some are languishing, the rural folk have preserved and fostered, quite a few folk-plays such as Ram Leela, Rasa Leela, Prahalad Natak etc. A brief account of these are given below :

Rama Leela : It is a religious folkplay. The word Leela literary means sport and therefore 'Ram Leela' portrays the sport of Rama, the King. Ram Leela performances start from Ram Navami day and usually deal with the various incidents from the story of Ramayana which continues for several nights. Actors playing the role of demons, wear masks. Actions in the play adhere to dance-music or song-music which are cast in the form of dialogues. The band of chorus singers with orchestral music repeat the refrains.

Rasa Leela : Several Vaisnav poets have written innumerable songs of devotion pertaining to the ammorous sports of Radha and Krishna. Rasa Leela centres around the immortal love story of Lord Krishna with Radha and the Gopis and are played for nights together. Now-a-days dialogues have been added. The chorus singers always sing the refrains. Once upon a time Rama Leela was the most popular of the folk-plays of Orissa but its popularity has waned.

Bharat Leela : It is more popularly known as 'Dwari Leela' (Dwari means sentry) - Folk plays in Orissa draw their plots from

mythologies, epics, tales, ballads or romantic legends. Bharat Leela draws its plot from the epic tales of Mahabharat. It is therefore, called Bharat Leela. In this play four essential characters, namely Arjuna, Subhadra, Satyabhama and Dwari participate. The core of the Lela relates to love and subsequent marriage of Arjuna with Subhadra. Dwari (Sentry) plays a very major role. Orchestral music adds grandeur to the play.

Moghul Tamsha : It is a satirical play on the Mughals and is confined to Bhadrak area. It is not a play of only Oriya language. It is multi-lingual performance, with songs and dialogues being used in Persian, Urdu, Hindi languages. It was inspired by the Marathas, ruling over Orissa, who satired on the earlier Muslim (Mughal) rule. Moghul Tamsha is still a living tradition. It has no definite plot. The main actor is Mirja Saheb who is the Moghul administrator. People masquerading as personal service-holders of Moghul rulers are called one by one to the stage. They sing songs and introduce themselves. Enough humour and satire is provided through the dialogues. Music is provided with Dhol and Jodi-Nagara. The folk-play provides entertainment to the people.

Prahlad Natak : It is typical play of Ganjam district of Orissa. Literally it means a play about Prahlad, the devotee boy. This unique folk theatre embodies many of the rich folk, classical and tribal traditions of Orissa. The play was written by Gopinath Parichha, a well known poet and playwright of South Orissa in the 19th Century. The subject matter is the appearance of Lord Nrusingha, the suppression of pride of demon Hiranya Kaship and yearnings of devetee boy Prahallad.

Suanga : 'Suanga' means joking. It is a folkplay and its tradition is very old. It is a development over the Leelas. Suang mostly concerns itself with stories from legends, folklores, episodes from mythologies and often from history. In Suang, all the characters sing, dance and act. Due to greater popularity of 'Jatra', Suanga has slowly died out.

Yatra : Yatra originated as a development over the folkplay i.e. 'Suanga' during last quarter of the 19th century. The main developments were introduction of dialogues in blankverse, use of foreign musical instruments, dazzling costume, humour with rustic

characters in local dialect. Mostly Oriya Suanga playwrights changed over to Yatra, after Yatra emerged with its popular appeal. Yatras no longer confine themselves to mythological or historical plays. Popular legends and social themes found place in the plays. In its earlier stages, the Zamindars used to patronise them.

For the first time Yatra parties (troupes) were formed in Orissa in 1878. But later, Yatra parties were formed on professional lines. Pioneers of professional Oriya yatra were Jagannath Pani (1836-37) Gopal Das, Balakrishna Mohanty (1900-58), Govind Chandra Sur Deo (1884-1939), Krishna Prasad Basu (1896-1968) and Baishnab pani (1882-1956). Baishnab Pani modernised and revolutionised the Yatra form in Orissa. His contribution to the growth of mass culture as a way of popular entertainment, is immense. He introduced duet dances and prose dialogues in blank verse and used techniques of Western Opera. These plays with their embellishments were also called 'Geeti Natya'. Modern Yatra parties have become very successful under the spell of cinematic imitations. Even modern plays are being adopted for staging yatra. Modern cinema has deeply influenced the form of yatra. There are duet dances. Songs in the present-day yatras, are set to popular tunes mostly in imitation to cinema songs. Yatra parties not only perform in rural areas, these are also being staged in small towns. It has become very popular and very lucrative business. More and more professional troupes are entering the field.

Oriya Theatre

Orissa had a long theatre culture. After occupation of Orissa by the English in 1803, people came in contact with Western education and culture. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, modern theatre came to Orissa. Before that, Orissa had only Yatras, Suangas and Operas. During the British regime, historical and mythological dramas were being staged. Large number of theatres therefore came into existence, during this period, with efforts of Kings, Zamindars and rich Aristocrats. Amongst them were Padmanav Theatre (Parlakhemundi), Jagannath Theatre (Puri), Chikiti Theatre, Khariar Theatre,

Kothpada Theatre etc. where dramas got staged. The modern commercial or professional theatres, thereafter, came into existence. It would be interesting to chronicle the growth and development of Oriya theatre in a nutshell.

In 1916, the first commercial theatre, 'Radhakrishna Theatre' was established by Banamali Pati at Balanga in Puri District. After death of Pati. Aswini Ghosh purchased it and restarted it in 1928 under the name Banamali Art Theatre, which lived upto 1936. In 1935 Sarathi Theatre was set up at Berhampur but it did not last for more than two years. In 1933 Somnath Das set up 'Annapurna Natyamandali' which was renamed 'Annapurna Theatres'. Annapurna Theatre was a great success. To cope up with demand for theatrical plays, it was bifurcated into Annapurna 'A' group and 'B' group and started functioning at Puri and Cuttack. But these did not last long. The two theatre parties closed down around 1970 due to various reasons. In 1929, Kali Charan Patnaik, a noted dramatist, set up 'Sakhigopal Natyasangha' which was renamed 'Orissa Theatres' in 1939. It was very popular amongst the audience from the entertainment point of view. But many artists left this organisation and the theatre closed down in 1949. In 1942, Bharati Theatre and in 1944 New Orissa Theatre were set up but because of mismanagement, these two theatres did not last long. Similarly Rupashri Theatre was started at Cuttack in 1946-47 but it did not last long. In 1953 a successful theatre called 'Janata Rangamancha' came into existence at Cuttack but it closed down in 1970 because of management problems. Another Theatrical party called 'Kalashri Theatre' was set up at Cuttack in 1966 but it did not survive for long. It is not possible to catalogue all the small and large theatre parties in Orissa which were born but died unceremoniously. A significant aspect of the New Wave Drama (Naba Natya Dhara) in Orissa was the play 'Agami'. By this time amateur parties known as 'Group Theatre' had come up in the State. 'Srujani' organisation was most prominent amongst them.

The reasons for the fall of the professional theatres in Orissa, otherwise known as commercial theatres, are not far to seek. The audience did not favour them because of lack of new

subjects, lack of good acting, absence of popular music and above all the management problem. Middle Class people used to patronise theatres. But their tastes changed with the incoming of cinema and television. The tradition of staging Oriya dramas have, however, been kept up by a handful of amateur drama organisations. Annual Drama festivals are being organised by them. But it is difficult to revive the commercial theatre although 'Utkal Rangamanch' is trying to do just that. However it must go to the credit of amateur theatre organisations that they have been able to keep theatre in Orissa alive by staging shows periodically, particularly during festivals. Such is the story of Oriya stagecraft.

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The trends in Oriya theatre have been outlined in the previous paragraphs. But the story would not be complete without mentioning the names of successful playwrights who had immensely contributed to modern Oriya drama. the first Oriya drama 'Babaji' was written in 1877 by Jagmohan Lala. But it was Rama Sankar Ray who is considered as the father of the modern Oriya drama. His first Oriya play was 'Kanchi Kaveri' which was written in 1880. He wrote many plays, most of which were staged. But in subsequent years it was Aswini Kumar who occupied centre stage of Oriya drama literature. Aswini Kumar wrote a large number of mythological, historical and social plays.

First play written by him was 'Bhisma' in 1915. His dialogue, dramatic technique and characterisation in plays were excellent. In the first part of twentieth century emerged Kali Charan Patnaik who was a playwright of repute. He staged social plays like Girl's School, Bhata, Raktamati etc. which mesmerised the audience. In the post-independent Orissa, playwrights who had made immense contributions to Oriya drama, were Gopal Chhotray, Kartic Kumar Ghose, Laxmidhar Nayak, Ramchandra Mishra and Bhanja Kishore Patnaik and others. Their successful stage plays popularised Oriya drama. Prominent amongst them was Gopal Chhotray who was also a prolific writer of plays for radio drama. In the subsequent years, playwrights whose contribution was recognised were Kamal Lochan Mohanty, Pranabandhu Kar, Byomkesh Tripathy, Basant Kumar Mohapatra, Himansu Bhusan Sabat, Biswajit Das etc. In the post 1960 period, there was a change from the conventional drama. This was reflected in the new 'absurd' dramas. Prominent writers were Manoranjan Das and Bijay Mishra. Other play-wrights such as Kartik Rath had also composed absurd experimental dramas. It is not possible in this short space to mention names of all dramatists who had contributed to new Oriya drama movement. But it is worth mentioning that a number of stage actors and actresses have dedicated their lives for success of Oriya theatre. Prominent amongst them were Samuel Sahu (babi), Priyanath Mishra, Byomkesh Tripathy, Natbar Sena, Sarat Pujari, Askhay Mohanty. Dhiren Das, Hemanta Kumar Das, Govind Tej, Dhirendranath Biswal, Nitai Palit, Prasanta Nanda, etc. Female actresses were Radharani, Manimala, Lila, Susama Tej, Jharana Das, Bhanumati and host of others.

It is worth mentioning that modern Oriya Yatra has virtually ousted the commercial theatre. Modern Oriya theatre, however, still lives due to pioneering efforts of amateur theatre groups. They are continuing their efforts to attract the audience with newer stage-plays. They deserve assistance and encouragement in this noble venture.

CHAPTER - VII

Handlooms and Handicrafts of Orissa

India for millenia have been famous for the variety and beauty of its handlooms (Handwoven textiles). Handloom is a loom operated by hand. It requires a space of barely 10 Sq. mtrs. Generally, weaving is a family activity, helping each other in the processing and producing cloth. According to a recent census, there are about four lakh weavers in Orissa, operating about one lakh looms.

Handloom

Orissa had been in ancient times exporting fine cloth through its ports. The manufacturing activity in those days, was an important economic activity. In the tribal societies of Orissa, many tribal groups used to weave their own clothes. Particularly Bonda women using their native looms, weave Ringa cloth out of Kerang fibres which are collected from the forest. Today this practice is dying down in the tribal groups. Hand-weaving of cloth is one of the richest medium of cultural expression of people. One of the earliest references to Orissa's Handloom Tradition is found in jyotinisvara's Varnaratnakara, written in the early fourteenth century in Maithili. The tradition of intricate and painstaking hand-weaving referred to in this treatise in Orissa continues to the present day.

Orissa had a rich tradition of producing 'ikat' fabrics. The term 'ikat' comes from Malaya-Indonesian expression 'mangikat' meaning to bind knots or wind around. The Ikat technique of manufacturing handlooms is called 'tie and dye technique' and is

also known as 'bandha' technique in Orissa. The 'bandha' process means to bind, knot or wind around. The Ikat dyeing involves the sequence of tying or wrapping and dyeing sections of bundled yarn to a predetermined colour scheme prior to weaving. Thus, the dye penetrates into the exposed sections, while the tied sections remain undyed. The patterns formed by this process on the yarn are then woven into fabrics. In Ikat technique, which is also called 'tie and dye (bandh) technique', the designs in various colours are formed on fabrics either by the warp threads or the weft threads or by both.

Orissan handlooms are recognised all over the country and abroad for their highly artistic designs, colour combinations, motifs and durability. This handwoven fabric is replete with everyday motifs like flower, tree, wheel, fish and religious symbols like conch etc. The final products are unique creations - aesthetic yet functional. Because of labour-intensive work, demanding great skills, the cost of the fabric becomes high. However the woven fabrics bear testimony to the artistic ability and tradition of weavers of Orissa.

Traditionally, women of Orissa dressed in Sarees of blue, red and magenta and other deep colours. With synthetic (as opposed to vegetable) dyes available, more colours like orange and other mixed colours have come into use. The beautiful and eye-catching sarees are made in the State, mainly at Nuapatna near Cuttack and in the inland weaving centres around Sambalpur, Bargarh, Sonapur and Boudh Districts. These are the major centres of production.

In these areas the layout of the textile designs, takes the form of horizontal shapes. Motifs are mainly floral or of fish and animal design. One of the most popular motifs used in the fabrics of Nuapatna area, is the elephant (Gaja) particularly in the Khanuda cloth used by brides at marriage time. Large and small stars, elephant, deer, parrot, nabagunjara, lotus and other flowers, creeper, kumbha, danti (tooth like) patterns have been used since long on silk and cotton fabrics. Of late, however, there has been a diversification in designs and production. New centres of production have come up and have gained popularity and also

consumers' acceptance. Notable amongst these are 'Bomkai' and Habaspuri sarees and also cotton sarees produced in Berhampur area. Experimental innovations continue to be made to weave exclusive, intricate fabric designs in cotton and silk fabrics. The master weavers also have shown their talent in clothes made out of Tassar silk.

Today, the handloom sector in Orissa is at cross roads as its market is being eaten into by less expensive, powerloom and mill products. Weavers have therefore, begun to diversify their product range. They are producing yardage for dresses, furnishing bedlinen, cushion covers and upholstery. Home furnishing productions are being made in the State. Kotpad' scarves, 'Dhalapathar' curtains and Sambalpuri bed covers are examples. The product of Orissa handlooms are second to none and are exquisite and artistic and have been welcome in foreign markets.

Handicrafts

The beauty and charm of Odissi handicrafts mirror their heritage. It is a Collector's delight. It reflects tradition which still lives in the creative imagination and skill of Oriya craftsmen. It is a rich legacy of an ancient culture. One can look at the myriad handicrafts of Orissa some of which are outlined below.

Stone Carving : Stone sculpture artists prepare imposing stone statues. They are found in Puri, Bhubaneswar, Khiching and Lalitgiri. The stone carvers apart from art objects, prepare different objects of modern living such as ash-trays, bowls, vases with a traditional touch.

Silver Filigree : Silver filigree locally known as 'Tarakashi' is one of the prized handicrafts of Orissa. It is internationally acclaimed for its excellent finish, fine foil and texture, delicate artistry and marvellous craftsmanship. It is centred at Cuttack where silversmiths live. Elegant jewellery and decorative pieces are eye-catching. It is a craze for the modern fashion loving folks.

Applique Work : The brilliant applique work of Pipili has been internationally acclaimed. The craftsmen deftly stitch traditional and modern motifs such as elephant, peacock and flowers on cloth background, to form harmonious colourful designs with

embroidery work. The artists also make garden umbrellas, wall-hangings, cushion covers, bed-covers, colourful canopies, lampshades, ladies' bags, shopping bags and door screens.

Patta Chitra : This has been covered earlier under the head 'Painting'. It is a living art mostly practised by skilled traditional chitrakaras living in Puri and adjoining Raghurajpur area. Patta-Chitras (Canvas picture) make lovely wall-hangings. The artists prepare a canvas by coating the cloth with a mixture of chalk and tamarind seeds, which is called patas. On this leathery finish, the artists paint mythological themes from Mahabharat, Ramayana, tales of Radha-Krishna love and Lord Jagannath. Patta-Painting is now a thriving business.

Brass Bell Metal Work : The bell metalware occupies a proud place in Orissa's casting history. The flexible brass fish of Ganjam, the cute brass figurine of Kantilo, the brass and bell metal ware of Cuttack and metal lamps (Deepa Rukha) are typical examples of Orissa's metal ware. The metal castings called 'Dhokra' are typical examples of Orissa's metalware. Dhokra is an alloy and with its antique touch, goes well with interior decorations.

Wood carving and Painting : A special charm of Orissa's wood carvings is the blending of folk and classical forms. The wood carvers make a variety of decorative and utilitarian objects, such as toys depicting birds and animals, images of Gods and Goddess, wooden boxes and bowls.

Horn Objects : The richly textured and finely fashioned works from the horns of animals is a class apart. The Craftmen of Parlakhemundi and Cuttack skilfully fashion horns into birds, animals, fighting bulls, cranes, deer, elephants, camels, penstands, pipes, dainty lamp-stands and a wide range of scintillating objects.

Lacquer Work : Nowrangpur district is the home of lacquerware artists who make quaint lac boxes, wall plaques and decorative toys by applying molten coloured lac, obtained from tapping of particular trees, on bamboo matting. Among other beauties of

this craft are bangles, necklaces and toys which are generally in great demand.

Terracota : Terracota is an art form universal in its scope and has a distinct imprint of the native soil. The art of kiln burnt potteryware is marvellous. Other graceful terracota artefacts are locally made such as horses, goats etc.

Tribal Crafts : Tribal crafts once covered objects like hunting weapons, fishing implements, agricultural implements, household objects, personal belongings, textiles, ornaments, dhokra objects, musical instruments etc. These have different names in the myriad tribal dialects. To give a few examples sika is a wine vessel and gunub is a drum in Bonda tribes. Sanar is a comb and Changu is a famous musical instrument amongst Saoras. Binda is an arrow and karadi is a bell in Kondha community.

Special mention may be made of the wood carvings of Kondhs and Juangs, embroidery work of Dongria Kandhs, musical instruments of Santhals, combs of Kutia Kondh and Dharuas, carpentry works of Lanjia Saoras, bamboo work of Mahalis and siali fibre work of Mankdias. With the impact of modernity, tribal crafts are gradually disappearing.

CHAPTER - VIII

Festivals of Orissa

Orissa is known for her colourful festivals. The festivals are numerous, spread over all the twelve months of a year. The village life centres round agriculture. Therefore, there is an intimate relationship of festivals with the numerous agricultural operations that take place. Festivals are also observed as part of Hindu religious faith. Dates for festivals are determined by the traditional Hindu Calendar. The specialities of most of the Orissan festivals are that, on these occasions, much merry-making is done, new clothes are worn and special dishes are prepared at home. The Orissan cuisine is at its test in these functions. Delicious dishes prepared include small cakes known as 'Pitha' and also sweets made from milk. Festivals carry forward people's tradition and culture. A brief summary of major festivals of Orissa is given below :

Month (Approx)	Festivals :
January	Makar, Dhanu Yatra
February	Magha Saptmi, Saraswati Puja
March	Dola Yatra (Holi), Siva Ratri
April	Asokastami, Mahavisuva Sankranti, Rama Navami
May	Jhamu Yatra, Chaita Parva
June	Sitalsasthi, Raja Festival
July	Car Festival
August	Jhulan Yatra, Rakhi Purnima

September	Ganesh Puja
October	Durga Puja, Kumar Purnima, Diwali, Nuakhai
November	Kartika Purnima, Aunla Nabami
December	Prathamastami

A brief summary of the major festivals in the State is recounted :

Raja Parba : This festival is the most important in coastal Orissa and unique in its observance in honour of the Mother Earth. It is observed for three days. All agricultural operations remain suspended during these days. During 'Raja' festival, food specialities are prepared in every home. The most important is 'Poda Cake' made out of rice, coconut, molasses and spices. Children take Pitha (Rice cakes) and fruits during this period. They wear new clothes and make a lot of merry-making in 'Swings'.

Mahabisuva Sankranti : This is the beginning of new year in Orissa. This festival is also called : 'Pana Sankranti'. On this day in every Oriya home, 'Pana' or household sweet drink is given to the neighbours and visitors. Families make special prayers and food offerings in the temples. On this day also ends the firewalking function called 'Jhamu Yatra' where penitents walk on live charcoal to the accompaniment of gongs and drums.

Rath Yatra or Car Festival : This is the grandest of all festivals in Orissa and is held at Puri. It begins from the second day of the bright half of (Asadha) month which falls in June or July every year. It is the sacred journey of images. Lord Jagannath with brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra in wooden chariots journey from main Jagannath temple through the streets to another shrine called 'Gundhicha Ghar', where the deities stay for nine days. On the last day, the return journey is made i.e. from Gundhicha Ghar to main Jagannath temple. This is called Bahuda Yatra. Thousands of devotees from all over India throng on Ratha Yatra day at Puri to pull the sacred Chariots.

Akhoya Trutia : This is the oldest agricultural festival in the State. On this day farmer goes to his field with turmeric powder,

sandal paste, paddy seeds mingled with vermilion and rice cakes. He takes along with him his plough. In the field, he prays and offers 'Bhoga' to goddess Lakshmi and sows fistful of paddy seeds in the field after ploughing it.

Ashokastami : This is celebrated in grand form at the Lingaraj Temple at Bhubaneswar. This is a chariot festival like the Car Festival of Puri. The protege of Lord Lingaraj (Siva) is taken out in a wooden chariot from the main temple to Rameswar temple. The chariot returns after a four day stay with Mausi Maa.

Durga Puja : It is celebrated with much colour and festivity in the State. Durga Puja symbolises the commemoration of victory of good over evil. Mother Durga on this day killed the demon 'Mahisasura' and brought about peace in the land. Puja Mandaps with coloured clay images of goddess Durga are set up in large numbers. Crowds throng Puja Mandaps to enjoy the festivities. Goddess Durga is worshipped from the Seventh to Tenth day. On the Tenth day called 'Vijaya Dasami' or the Dussehra, the images are taken out in a spectacular procession for immersion in the river.

Makara Mela : Makar Sankranti is celebrated with much gusto when the sun enters the orbit of Capricorn. By this time, harvest of new paddy, sugarcane crops etc. are over. On the day of the Sankranti, food offering are made to God. Sun God is worshipped with great fervour and enthusiasm by one and all. The festival is also called 'Makara Mela.'

Mahasiva Ratri : On this day, devotees remain on fast and perform 'Puja' in the 'Siva' temples. The main festival is celebrated at the Lingaraj temple in Bhubaneswar where sacred lamp burns on the temple top.

Dola : This is very popular and colourful festival in the State. Radha and Krishna are the main deities who are worshipped in this 'Parba'. People in the rural areas carry the gaily decorated 'Viman' with the idols in the village streets singing devotional songs. The main attraction of Dola Yatra is Holi when people throw colour powders and waters on each other.

Chaiti Parba : This is the main festival of fishermen community. They dance with a wooden horse in villages. This is called (Ghoda) Horse dance.

Nuakhai : This is a major social festival of Western Orissa. Generally, it takes place in August-September on an auspicious day fixed by the astrologers. Although the festival is meant for eating new rice of the year, it is observed as a day of general festivity. New rice is cooked with milk and sugar and distributed. People greet their friends and relatives.

Magha Saptami : On this day thousand of pilgrims take holy dip in the sea near Chadrabhaga beach. They welcome the rising sun with prayers. Konark is the place of main festival. According to 'Puranas' Samba worshipped Sun God on this day and was cured from leprosy disease.

Sitala Sasthi : This is the celebration of marriage ceremony of Lord Siva with Goddess Parvati and is mostly observed in Western Orissa particularly at Sambalpur in June. The wedding of the divine couple is observed with much pomp and ceremony. Lakhs of people witness it when the idols are taken out in procession on a 'Medha'.

Dhanu Yatra : This is colourful festival of Western Orissa, particularly at Bargarh town. Dhanu Yatra, relates to the episodes of Lord Krishna's visit to Mathura where King Kansa, the tyrant, ruled over his subjects. The ceremony is colourfully observed at Bargarh where thousands of people assemble daily to witness the ceremony. The town of Bargarh becomes Mathura. The river Jira becomes Yamuna and the village Amapali on the other side of river becomes 'Gopa'. Different acts of the puranic descriptions are performed and spectators witness it with great joy.

Thakurani Puja : Thakurani is the presiding deity of Berhampur in South Orissa. Her blessings are sought by everybody. The Thakurani Yatra is observed with much pomp and ceremony when the deity is brought outside.

Chhau Festival : This is a famous war dance. Other subjects have also come into this dance.

Tribal Festivals

The amazing conglomeration of the traditions, beliefs, sorrows and philosophies together constitute and vitalise the rituals and festivals of the tribals who inhabit Orissa. They have retained their rich and varied heritage of colourful dance and music forming an integral part of their festivals. The description that follows gives a brief account of some of the best known festivals of major tribes of Orissa.

Saora : Festivals of Saoras relate to various agricultural operations and harvest of crops. Some of the important festivals relate to various crops like millet, gram, sweet potatoes etc. (Buroy-n-a-Adur; Ganugas-n-a-Adur; Kusaj-n-a-Adur; Osa-n-a-Adur).

Kondha : They observe a programme of feasts and festivals round the year for better yield of crops. The Chaitra Parab festival is observed before sowing paddy seeds. Kedu festival is observed in the month of February-March.

Koya : They observe religious festivals like Bijja Pandu, Marka Pandu and Idu Pandu where religious rituals are strictly observed.

Kolha : Kolhas observe four festivals which are combinations of a socio-religious and recreational activities. These are Magha Pudi, Ba-Parab, Hera Parab, Jamna Parab. Most of these take place when harvest is over or before eating new fruits like mango, jackfruits etc.

Oraon : They observe religious festivals connected with their economic pursuits.

Gadba : Their important festivals are Bandapura-Parab, Dashara Parab, Pusha Parab and Chaita Parab.

Paroja : Parojas observe many seasonal festivals with pomp and ceremony. Festivals are observed round the year. Amongst the important festivals are Asadhi Parab, Nuakhia, Baujani Jatra, Pusa Parba and Chaita Parba.

Ho : Hos observe seven important festivals like Madhe, Saha, Damurai, Hero, Jomrama, Kolan and Batauli. These are mostly associated with their agricultural operations.

Juang : Dance and Music form an integral part of the social and religious festivals of Juangs. They observe Pus Punai with much fun-fare.

Kharia : Like their other tribal brethren, Kharias are very fond of dance and music. Every occasion of festivity is celebrated with dance and music.

Kisans : When Kendu twigs are planted in the agricultural fields, a festival is observed. They observe Nuakhai when new rice from the fresh harvest is eaten. They observe Puspunai festival in the months of December-January which marks the end of the annual agricultural operations.

Mirdhas : On festive occasions, special dishes like rice cakes and mutton are prepared and eaten with much dance and music. Amongst their important festivals are Nuakhia (Eating new rice) and 'Amba-Gundi' (When mango, Mahua and Kendu fruits are eaten when the first crop comes).

Santal : They are a progressive lot now-a-days. Yet they have kept up their traditional festivals. Makara and Tusu are their main festivals.

Young tribal girls in Western Orissa perform Dalkhai dance on festive occasions like Dussera, Bhai Jiant etc.

We have made a round-up of festivals of Orissa. No doubt some of the festivals are fading out, on the impact of modernity. Yet those which have survived to this day, continue to be a source of joy to the people.

CHAPTER - IX

Cult of Lord Jagannath in Orissa

Puri is a coastal town in Orissa, situated by the sea-shore. It is one of the four most holy places of pilgrimage in India (Dhama) - the three others being Badrinath in the North, Rameswaram in the South and Dwaraka in the West. The great Hindu temple of Lord Jagannath is situated in Puri. The presiding deities in the temple are Lord Jagannath, his elder brother Balaram and their sister Subhadra. The word "Jagannath" means Lord of Universe. The images are a triad of fascinating wooden figures (Wooden deities) painted in brilliant colours and lined up next to each other, sitting in Ratna Singhasan (Jewelled Throne) in the sanctum sanatorium of the temple. The main image is that of Lord Jagannath after whom the temple is named. Lord Jagannath is also called Daru Devata, a word which means wooden deity. The Puri temple is known popularly as Jagannath temple. It is the hallowed seat of Lord Jagannath. Mystery surrounds its origin, scholars give diverse opinion. Many legends are recounted to explain the strange form of Jagannath. According to the most popular legend, Lord Jagannath was being worshipped by 'Savaras' (Tribal people) as 'Nilamadhab' in dense forests. Viswavasuu was the Chieftain of Savaras. King Indradyumna was ruling Abanti at that time. On hearing that the God Absolute is present in Nilagiri of Udradesha whose glimpse gives salvation, he sent his priest Vidyapati as his emissary to Utkal. On arrival here, Vidyapati stayed in the Savara hamlet. He established rapport with Viswavasuu, who being merciful took him in a secret narrow path and showed him 'Nilamadhab'. Vidyapati on return informed King Indradyumna and thereafter the King went to

Utkaladesha with Narada. On arrival there, King of Utkal informed him about the recent disappearance of Nilamadhaba. Indradymna was extremely disappointed but was consoled that God will appear in shape of a log of wood in four-fold images. The king performed Aswamedha Yajna. On its closing day Indradyumna saw God 'Nilamadhab' in his dream. Later royal messengers informed him that a four-branched great wooden log in the sea was floating. A divine voice was heard from the heaven that "Lord Jagannath will himself construct his own image and get them installed on the Mahavedi (The Great Throne). Mahavedi will remain closed for a period of fifteen days. The old carpenter who is standing outside with his instruments should be allowed inside and the door be closed. Nobody should open the door and go inside the room until the construction work is complete, in fifteen days". The old carpenter was no other than the Viswakarma, the divine architect, who appeared in the guise of the carpenter. After some days, the Queen hearing no sound or noise of construction work from inside, got curious and caused doors to be opened, to find that Viswakarma had disappeared leaving behind, three wooden unfinished images. They were the trinity-Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra. Again in accordance with divine instruction, the king installed the three images in a newly constructed temple and worshipped them.

The existing temple of Jagannath was built by first ruler of Ganga dynasty, Chodagangadeva in twelfth century A.D. The triad of three wooden images, Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra were installed inside the temple in the sanctum sanctorum. Worship was started. There are hundreds of temple servants or Sevaks who were appointed by the King for services to the deities. The descendants of Sevaks are performing the rituals to this day. There are thirty-six traditional communities (Chhatisa Niyoga) each rendering a specified hereditary service to the deities. Among them also are temple priests. Then there are communities of potters who produce thousands of ritual vessels used by the temple daily, for preparation and consumption of food. Communities of carpenter build every year new wooden chariots for the Car Festival. The king introduced rituals of dance and music in the temple by appointing Devadasis (Dancing girls)

Called 'Maharis'. Musicians and instrumentalists were in attendance. The "Geetagevinda" composed by great poet Jayadeva used to be recited inside the temple. During the rule of Anangavim Dev-III, Jagannath Dharma was adopted as the State religion and King declared himself as the servant of Lord Jagannath. Shri Jagannath continues to remain the State deity of Orissa. Lakhs of devotees from all nooks and corners come to Puri. The family God of most households in Orissa is Lord Jagannath. The daily rituals in the temple are done by Sevakas according to the Records of Rights prescribed several centuries back. The first Sevaka is Gajapati Maharaj (King) living at Puri, popularly called "Thakur Raja". He performs some rituals, particularly sweeping the floor of chariots during the Car Festival (Rath Yatra).

A special feature of Jagannath Temple is that temple kitchens cook prasada (holy offering of food) sufficient to feed thousands of people every day. Jagannath Temple has the largest kitchen in the whole of the country. The cooked food is first served at Bhoga Mandap (the platform for sacred food offering) and after it is offered to the Lord, it becomes Mahaprasada. Early in the morning Gopala Balava Bhoga is offered, followed by Sakala Dhupa (Morning food offering), Madhyana Dhupa (Mid-day food offering). Sandhya Dhupa (Evening food offering), Badasinghar Dhupa (The last food offering) to the Lord.

There are descriptions about fifty-nine festivals of Lord Jagannath. But the most important and famous amongst them is the Car Festival or Chariot Festival (Ratha Yatra). Every year for Rath Yatra, the three Chariots are newly constructed. Lakhs of devotees throng Puri on this occasion, when the deities are put on public view. The Car festival is a 9 day long festival. It begins from Asadha (June-July) and the three deities come out of the temple and are taken on a journey of around 3 Kms. in procession in decorated chariots, for sojourn in the Gundicha Ghar (Temple). The return Car Festival (Bahuda) is held nine days later. The Chariot of Lord Jagannath is known as 'Nandighose'. The Chariot of Balabhadra, is named as 'Taladwaja'. 'Devadalan' is the Chariot of Subhadra. From Gundicha Temple, they return and re-enter the Jagannath Temple. This is called Return Car Festival (Bahuda Yatra). Car festival is one of the Country's most

incredible spectacles. Because the three divine images of the Puri temple are wooden, they have to be periodically replaced. On a cycle determined by the Hindu calendar, the deities cast their old frames and assume new ones. Generally this comes once in twelve years. This process and attendant function is called "Nava Kalebera" (New embodiment of three deities).

The cult of Lord Jagannath pervades the whole State of Orissa and in every household one finds the images. Numerous religious faiths came and spread religion in ancient Orissa - Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Vaishnavism, Saktaism and Bhaktism etc. But Jagannath Dharma (religion) assimilated all the religious philosophies. Lord Jagannath was gradually embraced by all the religious sects. Thus evolved Jagannath cult which is a unique cult. It is an all-embracing synthesis of various cults and religions. It has contained diverse faiths, cultures, creeds and ideologies. Therefore, cult of Jagannath has come to be regarded as the religion of masses (Gana Dharma). Jagannath is the deity of Kings, Brahmins, Scavengers, downtrodden and the common men, and of all castes. The uniqueness of Lord Jagannath is that while in other places, the religion and culture of that place is not associated with the names of the presiding deities, here in Orissa Jagannath has continued to be the epicentre of the religion and belief of Oriya people.

The cult of Lord Jagannath is based upon love and affection, service and sacrifice and displays the idea of equity in society. It unites people belonging to all castes, creeds, colours, faiths and religions which is a unique feature in the world.

CHAPTER - X

Oriya Literature

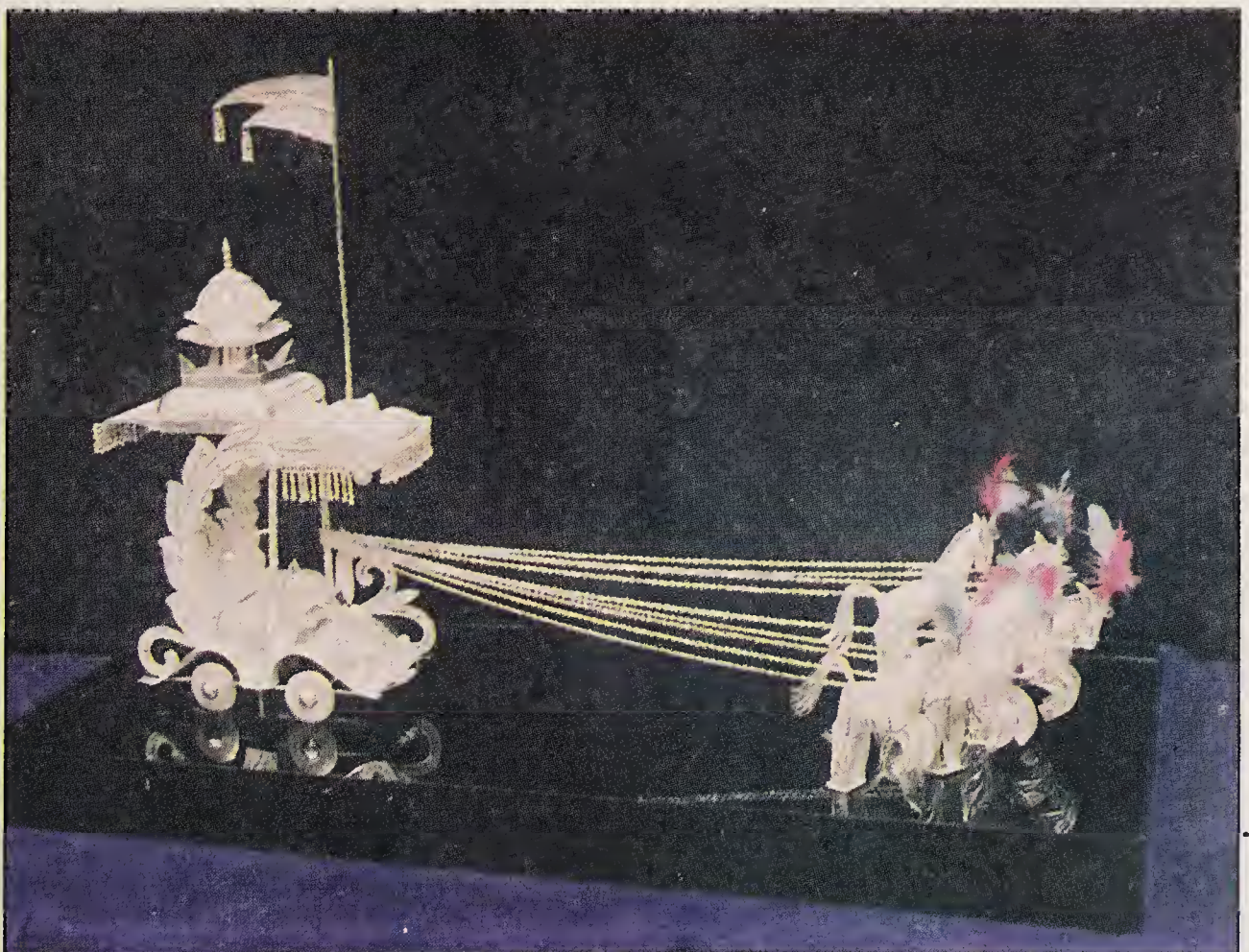
There is a consensus among eminent Indian Philologists that Oriya is a separate language and has a rich literature. Oriya language was derived from Magadhi Apabhramsa. Emperor Kharavela's inscription (1st century B.C.) at Udayagiri hills near Bhubaneswar in Orissa has very close resemblance with Pali. Ashokan inscriptions at Dhauli hills near Bhubaneswar (3rd Century B.C.) provide specimens of Magadhi sub-dialect. Of course quite a few scholars of Eastern languages have claimed Buddhist Caryapada (Budhagana and Doha) as the earliest stage of each of their languages (8th to 10th Century AD). It is however an established fact that Oriya emerged as a separate and independent language around the tenth and eleventh A.D. with a standard Oriya script. We would now turn our attention to the evolution of Oriya literature over the ages.

Oriya Literary works can broadly be divided into three phases :

- Old Oriya literary period** : From the inception of Oriya literature up to Mahabharata Kavya of Sarla Das i.e. upto 15th Century A.D.
- Medieval Oriya Literary period** : From Sarla Das i.e. from 16th Century AD to nineteenth Century AD. This includes the Bhakti Movement Period in Oriya Literature and includes Ornate Oriya Kavya period popularly called 'Riti Yuga'.



Oriya yatra Show



Silver Filigree Work - Cuttack



Applique Work, Pipili



Ghumura Dance, Kalahandi



Jagannath Temple, Puri



Car Festival (Rath Yatra), Puri



Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra - Deities

Modern Oriya Literary Period : From mid-nineteenth Century upto the present day — this includes the renaissance Period following occupation of Orissa by the Britishers and spread of English education and development of Oriya fiction, poetry, drama etc.

The Mahabharat of Sarala Das

The Imperial Ganga Kings of Orissa ruled the State from 1100 A.D. to 1435 A.D. They were lovers of Sanskrit literature and promoted the development of Sanskrit scholarship. The love for Oriya language, literature and culture emerged with the enthronement of emperor Kapilendra Deva of the Gajapati Surya Vanshi dynasty in 1435 A.D. He was a warrior of indomitable courage. Adikabi Sarala Das was the leading poet of this period during which Orissa was at the apex of her political and military glory and economic prosperity. During this period of Oriya resurgence, Sarala Das wrote three of his epoch-making works in Oriya — namely Mahabharata, Bilanka Ramayana and Chandi Purana, the most important being Mahabharata. All the three epics were composed in Dandi metre. His Oriya Mahabharata contained many deviations from and additions to the Original Sanskrit Epic. It was not a simple translation. Sarla Das has included in his works very many historical pictures of the then social life, military strategy etc. which were deviations from original Sanskrit text. The Bilanka Ramayana and Chandi Purana were also new creations of Sarala Das which did not merely follow the outlines in the original Sanskrit texts.

The great sanskrit classic “Geetageobinda” by saint poet Jayadeva, represents a high point of Lyricism and Bhaktirasa, which has enchanted performers and audiences all over the world, till today.

Bhakti Movement in Oriya Literature — Literature of the Panchsakhya Age

The Bhakti literature in Oriya flourished during 16th Century. Oriya literature was largely enriched by the contributions

of the five saint-poets (Panchasakha) who however did not emerge at a time. They were Jagannath Das, Balaram Das, Achyutanda Das, Yasovanta Das and Ananta Das. Jagannath Das and Shri Chaitanya were contemporaries. Shri Chaitanya propagated Goudiya Baishnav religion (Raganuga Prema Bhakti) whereas others were exponents of Utkaliya Baisanav Tatwa (Gyana Bhakti) The Panchasakhas were held in high esteem and formed a unique group holding forth Bhakti as the best path to realize God. They popularized religious and spiritual literature in Oriya which were formerly in Sanskrit language and had a close preserve of ballads, prayers and stories in verse which have a moral, cultural and religious bearing and were intelligible to Oriya laymen. Jagannath Das (1492-1552) was the most famous of the Panchasakhas and famous for his immensely popular Oriya Bhagabat. It is not a mere translation of the Sanskrit Bhagabat. Oriya Bhagabat was easily intelligible and could be memorized by the devotees, mainly rural masses. Almost every village had a place called Bhagabat Tungi where religious discourses based on Bhagabat were held. Jagannath Das had adopted a style in his Oriya Bhagbat which was at once chaste, elegant, dignified, beautiful, simple and intelligible to all classes of people and hence it's abiding popularity down the ages to the present day.

Imaginative Oriya poetry of 16th to 17th Century

After Bhakti-Kavyas, imaginative and romantic poetry occupied the next important place in Oriya literature. The simple Oriya used in 'Bhagabat' of Jagannath Das greatly influenced these works. The Kabyakars (poets) of this genre were Kanhai Khuntia (Mahabhava Prakash), Arjun Das (Ramviva), Banamali Das (Chata Ichhamati) Narasinga Sena (Parimala), Bishnu Das (Premalochna), Sisu Sankar (Ushavilas), Pratap Ray (Sasisena), Devadurlava Das (Rahasya Manjari), Kartik Das (Rukmini Vivah), Danai Das (Goparasa) and Purusottam Das (Kanchikaveri).

During this period, a number of poets enriched Oriya language by their remarkable literary contributions called 'Chautisas'. Thirty four stanzas from 'Ka' to 'Kshya' are placed at

the beginning of each composition. Chautisa normally used to cover narratives, love stories or religious feelings. The first Chautisa of Oriya literature is 'Kalasa Chautisa' of Bachya Das. This piece details marriage ceremony of Siva and Parvati. Other Chautisa works are Mandakini Chautisa, Barsabharna Chautisa and Kesava Koili of Markanda Das.

Age of Ornate Poetry in Oriya Literature

The Age of Oriya ornate poetry (Riti Yuga or Alanakar Yuga) extended from Dhananjaya Bhanja of mid-seventeenth century to Abhimanyu Samantasinghar of mid-nineteenth Century. During this period Bhakti Rasa was replaced by Srinagara Rasa. Although there were very many poets, Kabi Samrata Upendrabhanja took this ornate Oriya poetry to its zenith in the eighteenth Century. That is why this literary period is often called 'Bhanja Yuga'. In his poetic compositions Upendra Bhanja used his Slesha, Yamak, Chhandas (irony, humour, alliteration etc.) and other literary styles. He was a supreme exponent of mellifluous combination of words and had studied Sanskrit Abhidhans like Amarkosa and Trikandakosa. His mastery in rhetorical (1670-1720) usage conveyed 'Bahudha Artha' (multiple meanings) to each and every stanza by different juxtaposition of words.

Upendra Bhanja, the prince of Oriya Ornate poetic style, was a prolific poet. His works included-Chitralkha, Hemamanjari, Brajalila, Chandabhusan, Sadha Rutu, Kalakautuka, Subhadra Parinaya, Baidehisa Bilas, Rasa Panjanga, Prema Sudhanidhi, Rasika Harabali, Kanyabihar, Labanyabati, Purusottam Mohatmya, Geeta Abhudi, Koti-Brahamanda Sundari etc. The age of ornate Oriya poetry commenced with poet Dhananjaya Bhanja. After him came poets like Lokanath Bidyadhar (Sarabanga Sundari), Bhakta Charan Das (Mathura Mangal), Dinakrushna (Rasakallol). For over one century, however, Upendra Bhanja dominated this genre of poetry. Very many poets after Upendra Bhanja also composed Kavyas — Sadananda Kabisurya Brahma, Chanapati etc. The ornate Kavya tradition in Oriya literature ended with Bidagdha Chintamani of Abhimanyu Samantasinghar (1757-1807), who was a great Vaishnava poet in the twilight of medieval Oriya literature.

Oriya Lyrical Poetry

Towards the end of eighteenth century, the ornate Kavyajuga gave way to the age of Oriya Lyrical poetry (Geeti Kabita). Most of the lyrical poetry was composed in locally popular musical forms (Raga) so that those could be sung. During late 18th century and first half of nineteenth century, the most prominent lyrical poets included, Kabisurya Balladev Rath (Kishore Chandranan Champu) (1789-1845) Gopal Krishna (1785-1862), Gaurhari, Gauracharan, Basamali, Haribandhu. They mostly composed 'Chaupadis', which are now popularly called 'Odissi'.

Towards the close of the medieval period, Orissa was occupied by Britishers. Orissa then came in contact with English educations and civilization and with that, commenced the period of modern Oriya literature of nineteenth century.

Modern Oriya Literature (1803 Onwards)

The British occupied Orissa in 1803 A.D. brought with them English education, English literature and printing press. There were also publication of religious journals. The renaissance of modern Oriya literature commenced after 1850. The western impact was felt in every aspect of Oriya literature. The Oriya writers took interest in new genera like poetry, fiction, essays, drama, etc. Traditional Oriya poetry was replaced by elegy, ode, lyric, sonnet etc.

Fakir Mohan Senapati : (1843-1918)

He is considered the Father of modern Oriya literature, particularly in prose — in the field of novels and short stories. The first full-fledged novel in Oriya was written by Fakir Mohan Senapati called 'Chhaman Atha Gunta' (Six Acres and Half) based on the then feudal social systems with vivid portrayal of characters. Dr. J.V. Bolton in his book on 'Fakir Mohan - His life and prose fiction,' has said that the novel is a satire on the British judicial system. Dr. Bolton also translated Fakirmohan's autobiography titled 'His times and I'. The master creator wrote three more novels — 'Mamu', 'Prayaschita' and 'Lachhma'. Fakirmohan had a unique style of his own, using colloquial Oriya

language replete with humour and satire. These Literary creations remain unsurpassed even today. The foundation of modern Oriya short story was also laid by Fakirmohan in late nineteenth century. His first short story was 'Rebati' published in 1898. This was about female education, a sensitive subject a century back. Fakirmohan wrote scores of short stories covering the then Oriya village life, society, urban centers etc. His was a forceful literary genre in Oriya fiction.

Other founders of modern Oriya literature during the late 19th and early 20th century periods were Radhanath Ray, Madhusudan Rao and Gangadhar Meher. Radhanath Ray (1848-1908) started writing modern Oriya poetry in Late nineteenth century. He wrote mainly long narrative poems called 'Khanda Kavyas'. Among his long poems were 'Kedar Gouri', Chandrabhaga, Nandikeswari, Usha, Parbati, Darbar. Most of his themes were adapted from stories of Greek Legends set in Orissan surroundings. He wrote 'Mahayatra' which had a grand style, written in blank verse. Radhanath's contemporary was Madhusudan Rao (1853-1912). He was a talented poet. He ushered in modern age in Oriya poetry. He sang in praise of God and led a pure and sublime life. His famous poetical collections include Chharumala, Basantagatha, Kusumanjali, Bibhidha Kabita etc. Gangadhar Meher (1862-1924) was a famous poet of western Orissa of late nineteenth century. In Oriya Poetry, he used both classical and modern forms. His famous poetical works include 'Arghyathali', 'Tapaswini', 'Indumati', 'Kichakabadh', etc.

Against the afore mentioned general background to modern Oriya literature, an attempt is made to focus on pioneering works and cover important literary trends in Oriya poetry, fiction, drama, etc. by some of the representative authors. The field being vast, it is not possible to cover the works of all authors in the limited space available.

Oriya Poetry

Apart from the illustrious modern Oriya poets of late nineteenth century namely Radha Nath Ray, Madhusudan Rao & Gangadhar Meher, Nanda Kishore Bal too was a poet of high

caliber and distinction in Oriya poetry. He brought folk rhymes and folk traditions of rural areas into the sphere of modern Oriya poetry. His major contributions to poetry are: 'Sarmista', 'Nirjharini', and 'Pallichitra'. His poems were mostly set against rural background for which he is called 'Pallikavi'. Mention must also be made of Bhima Bhoi, the saint poet of Mahima religion in Orissa, extolling his Mahima Guru, the formless divine force. His works included 'Stuti Chintamani', 'Bhajanamala', 'Adintha Geeta', etc.

In the beginning of twentieth century, at Satyabadi in Puri district a school was set up by Gopabandhu Das to inculcate among the younger generation a spirit of Oriya nationalism. The Satyabadi School was a neo-cultural center where highly educated scholars like Gopabandhu Das, Nilakantha Das, Godabarisha Mishra etc. taught the students. Many of Gopabandhu's poems like Dharmapada, Abakash, Chinta, Bandira Atamakatha, Nachiketa Upakshyana upheld the national pride and the spirit of freedom movement as their themes. Gopabandhu's close associate, Pandit Nilakantha Das, was the author of the famous 'Konarka' Kavya. Amongst the Satyabadi group of poets, Godabarish Mishra has a place in modern Oriya literature whose poems were short, simple and lyrical. His works include 'Alekhika', 'Kalina' and 'Kishalaya'.

After the Satyabadi Group, the poets of 'Sabuja Group' emerged as a vital force in Oriya poetry from 1921 to 1935. The pioneers of this group were young people like Anada Sankara Ray, Kalindi Charan Panigrahi, Baikunthanath Patnaik, etc. They raised their voice against a tradition-bound society and exhibited, romantic mysticism. The period was, however, short lived.

There were other noted Oriya poets in these times who did not belong to "Sabuja Group". Amongst them was the famous and talented poetess Kuntala Kumari Sabat. Another important poet of this period was Godabarish Mohapatra, well known for his works Kankala and numerous political and social satires.

Two other celebrated poets of this period were Mayadhar Mansingh and Radhamohan Gadnaik. Mansingh is a doyen of

modern Oriya romantic poetry. His love lyrics include ‘Dhoope’, ‘Pujarini’, ‘Hemasasya’ etc. He was a prolific poet whose poetry was replete with love, patriotism, nature, humanism and a deep spiritual longing. Radha Mohan Gadhnaik was the other great poet of the period, who enriched Oriya literature by his vast and varied poetic output. He had a distinct style of metrical excellence particularly ‘Chanda’.

After the forties, Oriya poetry took a new turn. Although before independence, there were poets of what is called ‘Pragati Yuga’ influenced by Marxist thinking, their output was small and the trend was short lived.

Modernism in Oriya poetry has its real beginning with Sachi Routray. His revolutionary piece was the epic ‘Baji Rout’, a boatman boy who braved the British forces and was shot dead because he refused to ferry the British Police across the river on their way to suppress freedom fighters. Many of the poems of Sachi Routray have been translated into English, most important of which is ‘A boatman boy and forty poems’. He is an octogenarian. His works have a wide range and thematic variety. His poems have been published in a number of anthologies.

In the mid-fifties, Guruprasad Mohanty wrote modern poetry, influenced by English poets but expressed himself freely in Oriya. Bhanuji Rao was another talented poet of this period. During the sixties and seventies, Oriya Poetry took a new shape in the hands of two eminent poets — Ramakanta Rath and Sitakanta Mohapatra.

In the last thirty years or so, a group of talented Oriya poets have emerged. The group includes Jaganath Prasad Das, Sourindra Barik, Rajendra Kishore Panda, Soubhagya Kumar Mishra, Durga Charan Parida, Phani Mohanty, Harprasad Das, Srinibas Udgata, Brajanath Rath, Harihar Misra and a host of others. In Oriya, poetic output was proportionately large during this period. The poems cover from rambling thoughts to modern complexities of life.

Fiction

Fiction is the most important genre in Oriya prose literature. It covers both novel and short story. Fakir Mohan

Senapati was the pioneer in these two fields. We would now look at the post - Fakirmohan fiction period.

Novel

Fakirmohan had a unique style of writing novels. Inspired by his works, novels, typical of social life of Orissa and historical themes, were written. 'Kanakalata' by Nandakishore Bal is a social novel. Amongst the later novelists were Mrutyunjay Rath, Tarini Charan Rath, Ramchandra Acharya and Kuntala Kumari Sabat. Baisnav Charan Das and Upendra Kishore Das broke away from the traditional run of novels and wrote 'Mane Mane' and 'Malajahna'. The next important novelist was Kalindi Charan Panigrahi, famous for his *Matira Manisha* (1934) dealing with problems of joint family system. During early part of the twentieth century, Godavasrish Mishra, Godabarish Mohapatra and Chakradhar Mohapatra were prominent novelists. Harekrushna Mahatab, famous as a freedom fighter wrote many novels against the backdrop of Indian freedom movement (*Prativa*-1946), (*Abyapar* 1947). In the pre-independence period, nine authors jointly wrote a novel entitled *Basanti* (1924). During the forties of the last century, there was an efflorescence of Oriya Novel literature by the works of two novelists — Kanhu Charan Mohanty (1906-1994) and Gopinath Mohanty (1914-1991). Kanhu Charan was a prolific novelist and became very popular by ushering in a new trend in social realism. In 1935, he wrote 'Ha Arna' in the background of Orissa famine. His brother, Gopinath Mohanty, wrote novels drawing experience from different aspects of tribal and rural life. His *Paraja* and *Amritsar Santan* covered new ground. Rajkishore Patnaik created a new wave with his novels. But the most path-breaking novel was 'Amada Bat' (1951) written by Basanta Kumari Patnaik.

Surendra Mohanty (1922-1996) was a prominent writer of historical and political novels like *Neela Saila* (1968), *Satabdir Surya*. Nityananda Mohapatra was a follower of Gandhian idealism and wrote *Hidamathi* (1948), *Bhanga Hada*. During fifties, some good novels were published by Laxmidhar Nayak and Chadramani Das. But Santanu Kumar Acharya was a distinct path breaker in post Oriya novels with his *Narakinnar* (1962) and

Satabdir Nachiketa (1965). During this period Gokulanda Mohapatra wrote a number of science fictions such as Prithivi Bahare Manisha, Udanta Thalia, Sputnik. Chandra Sekhar Rath wrote novel with a spiritual undertone called Yantrudha (1966). Bibhuti Patnaik wrote good number of novels with love themes. Historical novels of Nrusingha Charan Panda about country's history and culture are noteworthy.

Jagannath Prasad Das made a new experiment in Oriya novel by his 'Desha Kala Patra' (1992) with narration of social and cultural history of Orissa. Based on Puranic material, Prativa Ray wrote 'Yagnaseni'. The author of this book has experimented with his two novelettes — 'Tathapi be Mu Banchibaku Chahe' and 'Sekatha Bhuli Huena' based on contemporary struggles in Oriya life. Most recent Oriya novels disclose a new socio-cultural ethos.

Short Story

We have already discussed the short stories of master writer Fakir Mohan Senapati who laid the foundation of modern Oriya short story. He was called 'Katha Samrat'. He used vivid and idiomatic Oriya language and portrayed Oriya village life as well as urban centers.

After Fakir Mohan, some important short story writers appeared in the scene, the most important being Laxmi Kanta Mohapatra. His short stories were 'Budha Sankhari', 'Adarsha Patni', 'Pratidana' etc. In the early part of twentieth century, Godavarish Mishra wrote some short stories, important ones being 'Bhaibhagari', 'Tola Kanya'. Godavarish Mohapatra was a successful story writer. His important stories include 'Magunira Sagada', 'Nila Mastrani', etc. His style was simple, yet forceful.

Oriya short story took a new but short turn after 1936 under the influence of Marxist Philosophy, particularly by Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi. This was, however, short lived. Various other short story writers later appeared in the scene and they were Pranabandhu Kar, Raj Kishore Ray, Raj Kishore Patnaik and Ananta Prasad Panda. Surendra Mohanty was a prolific short story writer in post independence era. His short stories disclose a deep sympathy for human misery.

Manoj Das is a talented story teller in Oriya. He is at ease both in English and Oriya. He often brings rudiments of folk-stories etc. and moulds them with superb ease. Important among his work are Laxmira Abhisar, Bhirna Manisha, Ananya Kahani. Kishori Charan Das is a very eminent writer of post independence period. His Anthology of short stories contains pieces such as Bhangra Khelana, Ranu Apa and Prayanti. Krushana Prasad Mishra and Achyutananda Pati are other prominent short story writers of post independent period. Rabi Patnaik, Akhil Mohan Patnaik, Chandrasekhar Rath, Bibhuti Tripathy, Binapani Mohanty, Uma Sankar Mishra, Hrusiksha Panda, Rama Chandra Behera, are other important short story writers of the modern period. Jagannath Prasad Das has written some unconventional short stories like 'Ame Jeumane'.

Short story is now an established literary form in Oriya Literature and there are large number of writers in the field. But Oriya short story still lacks depth of range and rich realistic experiences of human life. Particularly lacking are sensitive stories on the life of oppression and suffering of Dalits when one realizes that Orissa has a large Dalit population.

Drama

Drama in various forms had been a source of entertainment for the people. The Oriya drama grew out of folk plays known as Yatra, Leelas and Suangs. With the spread of English education, Oriya dramatists came in contact with English plays. The first Oriya drama was 'Babaji' written by Jagmohan Lala in 1877. Another pioneer in Oriya drama was Rama Sankar Ray. Afterwards, many writers were active in the field, chief amongst them were Kampal Mishra, Padmanav Narayan Dev and Bhikari Charan Patnaik. Kothpur Math near Mahanga in Cuttack district was an important stage center for dramas. In the early twentieth century, lyrical dramas of Baishnav Pani, Krushna Prasad Basu, Balakrushna Mohanty gained immense popularity. The greatest popular dramatist was 'Baishnav Pani'. During early part of the twentieth century, Oriya Drama took a new turn in the hands of new and bold dramatists like Ashwani Kumar Ghosh. Between 1937 and 1962 he wrote many social, historical and mythological plays. After him, came Kalicharan Patnaik whose immortal

creation was 'Bhata' (Rice) depicting man's inhumanity in times of famine.

A number of dramatists were engaged in writing drama in the post independence period. Amongst them were Rama Chandra Mishra, Pranabandhu Kar, Manoranjan Das, Bhanja Kishore Patnaik, Gopal Chhotray, Annada Sankar Das, Bymokesh Tripathy, Kamal Lochan Mohanty etc. While Gopal Chhotray excelled in Radio plays, Manoranjan Das created Oriya Nabanatya Drama. His creations were 'Amrutyaasa Putra', 'Aranya Fasal'. Then followed a large number of dramatists in this line. But professional Oriya theatre gradually died around sixties. Some absurd dramas were being experimented during this period. Some of the young dramatists wrote dramas in popular Oriya (Loka Natya Sailee) and Group theaters staged them. After eighties, progressive group of theaters emerged and staged dramas with lot of experimentation. Today radio and television plays are popular and Oriya drama has fallen into bad days. But most significant happening in the present times is the emergence of Yatra in a new form, which has become immensely popular.

Other Forms (Ramya Rachana)

Belles letteres is a new creation of prose literature and originated in the west. It is neither an essay nor a feature. It is also not a Lalit Nibandha. Ramya Rachana initially started in Oriya covering social problems with lot of humour and satire. Since then, many experimentation have taken place in this new form of writing.

In Oriya, development of Ramya Rachana is a post-war phenomenon. Fakir Mohan Senapati with his 'Nananka Panji' was a pioneer in the field. Then came a spate of writers like Gopal Chandra Praharaj, Govind Tripathy etc. In the post independence period, the most important writers of Ramaya Rachana were Krushna Prasad Basu (Akhada Ghare Baithak), Nityananda Mohapatra (Patra O Pratima), Phaturanda (Maskra). Others who have received popular approbation in this field are Mohapatra Nilamani Sahu (Sekala Pakhala), Choudhury Hemakanta Mishra (Aghatan), Bama Charana Mitra (Anusha Tenusha), Chandra

Sekhar Rath (Mu Satya Dharmi Kahuchi). The author of this book has written hundreds of Ramya Rachna (Drusti Kona and Phuturu Phaturu), using a new style with use of colloquial language and intense humour and satire covering contemporary problems. Large number of new writers in this field have emerged of late.

This is a broad and brief survey of Oriya literature. It is not a catalogue of all writers in Oriya. Oriya literature has now entered the 21st century with lot of promises. There is, however, no colossus in the present modern Oriya literature, except the octogenerian poet Sachi Routray. Writing in Oriya magazine 'Oriyan', Sachi Routray, the doyen of Oriya poetry, says that frequently complaints are heard about shrinking readership of Oriya books. He says Oriya literary works should set high standards. After all real judge of the merit of a literary work is the reader and substantial purchase of books by the authorities cannot create an excellent literary dispensation — says Routray.

CHAPTER - XI

Changing Cultural Scene

Orissa has a very distinctive identity in the Indian Cultural Panorama. The glorious traditions of dance, drama, music, sculpture, fine arts and other genres of Orissan art which confer this distinction, have not only been maintained but recognisably enriched by the vibrant creativity of the masters of these art forms, richly supported by the dedication, skill and faith of the performing artists, as well as the love of the people for the art forms with which their day to day life is intimately intermingled. Seen in the backdrop of the sea change brought about in the cultural attitude of the people by the all-pervading influence of modern dispensers of artistic culture like cinema, radio and television, this is no mean achievement. In the hill tracts of Orissa, the abode of a number of hill tribes, people live with their distinct cultures. The cultural traits have been kept alive more or less because of the exclusiveness of the different tribes from each other and protection from electronic invasion. However, even in these areas, some changes are discernible.

Over the centuries, when Orissan art and culture had the patronage of its rulers, people generally enjoyed better economic status. Art and culture of Orissa with popular support thrived. There was a period of economic downturn when the impoverished people could not support the growth and development of the cultural tradition. This set in a process of decline for a considerable period. In the post-independence era, efforts have been made by the government for the revival of abiding interest among the people in the traditional arts and provision of impetus to regain their past glory. Institutions to promote art and culture like the Sangeeta Natak Academy, the Lalit Kala Academy and Handicraft

Board, as autonomous bodies have been established. These institutions and other non-governmental organisations devoted to the promotion of performing arts like music and drama etc. aided by the Government are pursuing the same objectives. Their success story includes the revival and promotion of many ancient Orissan art forms which had become moribund or had faded out.

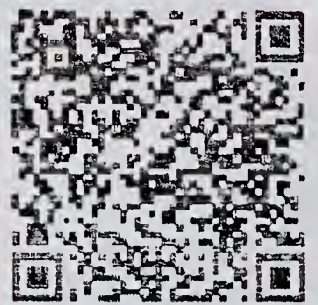
Decline had overtaken the famous artistic handloom industry of Orissa because of stiff competition from less expensive cotton and synthetic fibre products of textile mills and powerloom industries. The dress habits of people and particularly, the modern generation, have changed remarkably, so much so, that not only the urban, but even the semiurban and far off rural markets are flooded with latest denims, jeans, skirts and blouses. This has affected the livelihood of handloom artisans. The picture in the handicrafts sector is even gloomier. For revival of these arts, what is necessary is to enable the products of the sector to be market friendly.

The modern cultural scene in Orissa reflects more or less two parallel streams of development. The more visible one is the epidemic-like spread of what may be called Western pop-culture or rather poor imitations of it being dished out massively, day and night, by the entertainment industry through the electronic media, comprising cinema, radio, audio and video cassettes, compact discs and cable TV broadcasting programmes in 24 hours channels. The staple fare of this category of entertainment favoured by the youth is to assail the eyes of viewers with visuals of youthful male and female bodies unhibitedly exposed with explicitly erotic and sexual movements and assail the listener's ears with matching sounds and theme songs. So much so that even audio cassettes of devotional songs have not been spared of this kind of defilement. This is debasement of the cultural tradition. The parallel stream is the dissemination of our traditional folk and classical dances, classical and folk music, sculpture and painting, arts and crafts and handloom textiles among appreciative international and domestic consumers who are prepared to pay our artists and craftsmen what they richly deserve. The direction of future development should be to encourage and promote this within the country so that, the

cultural heritage surviving from ancient times can be given fresh lease of life by correcting deficiencies with the help of scientific techniques, tools and presentation and suitably attractive packaging. Simultaneously, the impact of the modern ephemeral trend of debasement of cultural taste of the youth should be countered effectively by making them take pride in their cultural heritage. This is the real task for the intelligentsia and the master artists and patrons of both fine and performing arts in Orissa.

Orissa has been known for its excellence in art and art form. Here is a book which highlights the colourful vista of art and culture of the state in a simple and lucid language. With supporting illustrations, this book will not only enrich the knowledge of the readers about the place but will also be a visual delight to them.

The author, Rabindra Mohan Senapati, is a former civil servant and is a noted writer in Oriya language.



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